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TWELVE YEARS AT THE IMPERIAL GERMAN COURT

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TWELVE YEARS AT THE IMPERIAL GERMAN COURT

BY

COUNT ROBERT ZEDLITZ-TRÜTZSCHLER

MARSHAL OF THE COURT
OF
WILLIAM II

London
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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

THE Memoirs of Count Zedlitz-Trützschler deserve a place of their own in the already voluminous literature about William II. It may confidently be predicted that they will be the standard authority on the subject, and indispensable to the future historian. The value of the book lies chiefly in its artlessness. The writer tells quite simply what he saw and heard, without any attempt at literary artifice, and therefore produces a consistent picture which possibly the most consummate skill could not have achieved.

The effect is what may be called cumulative. It is not a single incident which impresses the reader, but the long series of episodes, slight in themselves, which show how—slowly but surely—the worse elements in the Emperor's nature gained the upper hand, how they reacted on his surroundings, and how tragically the circumstances of the time in turn reacted on him. The writer is scrupulously impartial; he tells of the good and the evil in William II. While in the early days of his life at Court he was—like everybody else—dazzled by the brilliant personality of the Emperor, in the end his feelings had undergone a complete revulsion.

The reader should bear in mind the express statement of the author that he has not retouched the

picture and painted it in darker colours after the downfall of the Empire, but faithfully set down his evil presentiments at the moment.

In translating the book my object has been to produce a version as idiomatic as possible, consistently with preserving the impression that the original is the work of a man with a thoroughly German outlook and a thoroughly German way of expressing himself.

The text has been translated almost in its entirety. The only passages of any length omitted are those dealing with the nineteen-year-old Eulenburg-Moltke-Hohenau scandals, which, it seems, can be of little interest to-day. Only the sentences which describe the effect of the whole series of incidents on the character of the Emperor himself have been preserved.

Some of the reflections of the writer, which were mere repetitions of what had been said previously, have also been omitted, especially those sentences in which he repeats again and again that he is afraid the reader may imagine that he was more pessimistic than was actually the case. The omissions are denoted by dots.

The word "byzantinism," which occurs many scores of times in the original, has not always been translated literally. It is more familiar to a German than to an English reader.

In conclusion, I must express my grateful thanks to Mr Bertram Christian for his invaluable help—which almost amounts to collaboration—in the revision of the text.

A. K.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO present a clear picture of William II. is a task which has not yet been successfully accomplished in any of the volumes either of political recollections or of a deliberately historical character, which have so far been published. Nor have they succeeded better in throwing any adequate light on the tragedy of the German people, which is so inextricably interwoven with William II.'s personality. The blame for this tragedy should perhaps be laid less on any individual than on the burden imposed on Germany by her historical development, culminating as it did in the system of the dominant State, combined with an extraordinary concentration of power in the hands of one man and an impotent Parliament. There are few autocrats in history who have wielded powers as great as the Kaiser's.

The advantages of this centralisation of authority showed themselves in the enormous impetus given to Germany during the last few decades: the vices of the system could not fail to end sooner or later in catastrophe. It is only by the full realisation of this that we can hope to retrace our path from collapse to reconstruction and avoid again succumbing to the perils of such a system. Anyone, therefore, who has had opportunities of observing the inner mechanism of our political life seems to me to be

under an obligation to express any opinion, based on sincere conviction, which may help to save our country from errors such as have plunged us into deep humiliation and incalculable disaster.

The Kaiser is very generally held answerable for the catastrophe which has smitten us so ruthlessly. All the more are we bound to try and weigh, dispassionately and with absolute regard for truth, everything that helped to mould his personality.

Unfortunately it is an inevitable consequence of the life of a man in a position so exalted as William II.'s, that every path is more or less made smooth for him, and that he must, to the end of his days, remain ignorant of much that ordinary mortals learn only through the constant struggle to cope with the difficulties of life. There can be no other explanation of the Emperor's profound ignorance of the world, of his utter inability to judge men aright, his arrogance, his obstinacy, his overweening vanity, his readiness to lend an ear to adroit flattery. These are the reasons why in many respects he has never grown up.

There are two possible remedies for such defective development in royalties: one is frank untrammelled intercourse with their contemporaries; the other is that they should be faced with as many difficulties as possible which have to be overcome by the exercise of their own powers. Such free intercourse the Emperor never enjoyed. Even in his youth he bore the burden of a great task with the consciousness that he had been chosen for a mission, which it was his duty to turn into a blessing for millions of mankind. He never played till he was tired out with boys of his own age who were allowed

to think themselves his equals. How can anyone, who even as a child may never lose in a game, who must always be considered, fail to fall an easy prey to flatterers? How can any human being learn to form just judgments in human affairs, who never learns to understand the value of money until late in life; how can he ever learn it at all, if there are always others at hand to arrange everything for him?

How different was the development of the Emperor's near relative, King Edward VII., whose natural gifts were so similar. At a very early age he shook off the cramping shackles of court constraint. Forever in financial straits, he had to rely on his own skill to find a way out from them. In intercourse on equal terms with friends of his own age he had to swallow many a blunt word and, in association with other young men at play and in their common enjoyments, he won through to knowledge of mankind and experience of life. Nor was he spared the pain of freeing himself from the attachments in which he so easily allowed himself to be entangled. One might, I agree, hesitate to claim this as an ideal life for the heir to a throne, yet it seems to me that the English showed great common sense in judging this *éducation d'un prince* so leniently, as soon as they began to realise what a genius for sovereignty emerged from all these experiences.

In such differences of education and manners of life lay the deep roots of those misunderstandings between the two rulers, which were destined to be so fatal to Germany. On the one side, the man of the world, ten times tried in the furnace, who had every move of the game at his finger tips, and had trodden

every bypath. On the other, the idealistic big child, who had grown up, with none but flatterers about him, in ignorance of the world.

William II. never gave way, as his uncle did, to sentimental affection, and all the stories about him to this effect which have been current from time to time are baseless. But this feeling of superiority to all his acquaintance made him but too ready to believe that he was the chosen instrument of God, for whom Heaven had quite special designs. It was inevitable that out of this belief there should spring a pharisaical arrogance and the conviction that it was labour lost to strain his own best powers to the utmost for the attainment of lofty aims, since God Himself would surely see to it that His instrument should fulfil its appointed task.

A conception, so big with danger for the Emperor and his whole people, might have been modified by the ministers of religion with whom he came into contact, but it was, in fact, just they who confirmed it. Perhaps it was difficult for them to take a firm stand against the head of the Church; perhaps their feeling of dependence was too much for them. Be that as it may, not once in many decades did any ecclesiastic, either in public or in private conversation, dare even to criticise the glaring religious errors of the Emperor. They preferred to tolerate his utterances, whether pharisaical or absolutely unchristian, and to make use of him in the interest of the Church.

Hinzpeter's[1] dogma that a monarch should never be under the influence of any other man, not even that of his responsible advisers, was a serious danger to the development of the Emperor's character.

[1] Hinzpeter: the Emperor's tutor in boyhood and at the University.

In this connection Hinzpeter went so far as to find the influence of Bismarck over William I. too strong. His ideal of a monarch was one who, while he might perhaps listen to his responsible advisers, would yet stand above them, and pay no heed to them in forming his judgments and making his decisions.

The Emperor had, perhaps unconsciously, made this conception very largely his own. To this must be added his belief that, as an instrument of God, he was directly inspired by Him and thus could make no mistake. The consequence was that, thanks to his anxiety lest he should come under the influence of any individual, his inexperience of men and the world left him at the mercy of perpetually varying forces. This was the true explanation of the zigzag courses of our internal and foreign policies; with Germany only one thing was unchanging — and that was Change.

From what has been said above it is clear how difficult it was to serve such a personality sincerely, faithfully and truthfully, or to take up arms for an honest conviction, in hours of difficulty and danger. There were, too, certain other of his qualities and other circumstances which helped to make it almost impossible.

This brings us face to face with a question which is fundamental and far-reaching. There is a tendency to-day to underrate the intellect of the Emperor very seriously. There can be no dispute that his personality was a dazzling one, which exercised an irresistible fascination on all with whom he came into contact. Fully conscious of this gift, he developed it with much subtle effort to an extraordinary pitch of perfection; cultivating it to such a point that he could, whenever

it seemed to him worth while, completely bewitch not only foreign princes and diplomats, but even sober men of business.

But the power of this spell soon waned, for before long the effort grew wearisome to the Emperor, too much accustomed, as he was, to run after whatever happened to interest him at the moment.

His greatest victories were won over cool level-headed men of affairs who mainly held aloof from the traffic of Courts. His abundant knowledge and his skill in turning it to the best account never failed of their desired effect, apart from the fact that such conversations were often very well prepared, since the Emperor saw to it that he was supplied with the necessary material by the Foreign Office or by the Ministries concerned; and then startled men like Herr Ballin,[1] Professor Slaby,[2] Rathenau,[3] or Mendelssohn,[4] by his familiarity with their special subjects.

With his rapid grasp, it was enough for the Emperor to read a draft of twenty pages or more, however full of difficult technicalities, only once in order to have an astonishing command of its contents for purposes of discussion.

And so it came about that men of high standing, who had risen to eminence as the result of the sternest

[1] *Alfred Ballin.* The well-known head of the Hamburg-Amerika Line. Died in 1918.

[2] *Prof. Slaby.* Professor at the Technical High School in Charlottenburg. His name is chiefly associated with the earlier developments of wireless telegraphy.

[3] *Emil Rathenau.* Head of the Allgemeine Elektrizitätsgesellschaft. During the War directed the supply of raw materials. Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Wirth Government. Assassinated in 1922.

[4] *Franz* and *Robert Mendelssohn.* Leading Berlin bankers.

competition in industrial life, left his presence with the feeling that they had been received by a prophet, or even by one who was something more than man. Of course the impression gradually faded from the minds of such experienced persons, but still it was extraordinary how often they came under his spell, even when their suspicions had been awakened by the tinge of fantastic transcendentalism in the unpractical and often completely childlike utterances of the Emperor.

Next came the moment when they tried to tell the Emperor the honest truth. They were met with complete lack of comprehension. It was then that, if he still felt it worth his while to convert such persons to his view, after he had, so to speak, run aground, he exploded his last mine and spoke in words charged with emotion of his difficulties and of a cruel world which misunderstood him. Of such appeals to sentiment he was a rare master, and anyone who knows the Emperor can read between the lines in Rosner's descriptions how he too had fallen under the spell.

The Kaiser was repelled by any man who saw and described things as they were—that is to say, who spoke the truth—and straightway avoided him. Whatever the reason, all who honestly strove to tell the simple facts suffered shipwreck. If a man so powerful does not wish to hear the truth, it is impossible to tell it to him. As Bismarck had already remarked, he wanted every day to be a Sunday. Now this cannot be brought into line with the truth; any more than can his celebrated outburst, "I will have no prophets of evil[1] about me."

The tragic consequence of all this was that the best

[1] "Schwarzseher."

men were invariably without influence in the long run. Another misfortune for the Emperor was that, in consequence of his military education, he was never able to shake off the influence of the army. Even though the German army had, without a doubt, reached the highest stage of development, yet its most gifted generals, as, for instance, Caprivi,[1] were in no sense fitted to be political leaders. Of this the Emperor had not the vaguest idea, and it may well have been the result of his reading of history that he was more accessible to the influence of soldiers than could generally have been thought possible. For Chancellors, Ministers, and Diplomatists, as being mere civilians, he always had a touch of contempt.

The Emperor's curious knack of endearing himself to men by gifts and rewards was another thing which helped to make matters worse. He was always ready to overwhelm with distinctions anyone whom he considered to deserve them, and he took a genuine delight in the action. The excess to which this system was carried made for corruption, but strengthened the personal power of the Emperor quite amazingly.

It was a misfortune that even the Empress, silenced by her concern for the health and especially for the nerves of the Emperor, should never have warned him that he was allowing himself to be enmeshed by flatterers and sycophants, and was thus absolutely preventing the truth from reaching him. Full many were the cases of this kind that the Empress saw, but was powerless to change.

[1] *Georg Leo, Count von Caprivi* (1831-1899). General, 1883. Chief of the Admiralty; succeeded Bismarck as Chancellor in 1890, holding office for four years.

The Kaiser's subjects, too, as a little incident at the time of the debates in the Reichstag in November 1908 showed, were greatly to blame for this state of things. The Emperor, who was just then at Donaueschingen, was absolutely beside himself when news of the speeches in the Reichstag reached him. He shed tears and talked for days of resigning. From Donaueschingen he went to Baden-Baden to meet the Empress. There, too, people had read the speeches; and we were all eager to see how they would behave. As usual, the streets were thronged; the cheers and enthusiasm were if anything greater than ever. Then the Emperor said: "Now you see. These speeches in the Reichstag are nothing but conceit and self-importance. My splendid people understand me, they are at my back, every man of them." Quite unconsciously the populace, with its unquestioning cheers, exercised an enormous influence on the real mood of William II. There is, after all, a taint of servility in us Germans, and therefore fate has condemned us to the lot of slaves.

The Emperor's powers of observation were brilliant. The way in which he knew after some great function what people had conversed with each other, and what they were likely to have discussed, was amazing. In every case, however, he dominated the situation, and had a power over himself which would always, even had he been born an ordinary mortal, have raised him to eminence. But these very qualities bore in them the seeds of his ruin, for their only result was that his position became steadily greater and higher. It was but natural that many should use this to their profit, forcing their way to him from purely selfish motives, and surrounding him with

flattery. But all who came into contact with him were strongly influenced by the historical conception that the honour for Prussia's most glorious achievements belongs to her rulers.

Unfortunately, in Prussian history we have no Charles I. and no Oliver Cromwell. It is only the experiences of such a crisis, which are in the most violent contrast to anything that Prussian history records, which could have saved us. To free ourselves from the danger involved in such conditions as I have described by reliance on the strength or initiative of individuals would have been impossible; only a complete change in our system of government, and the creation of wise constitutional conditions, could have achieved our salvation.

Many years before the catastrophe actually occurred, there were a few clear-sighted individuals who saw a crisis approaching. It was their duty, as loyal servants of Crown and country, to consider whether the disaster could be averted, and they faithfully did their best. But they could not conceal from themselves that nothing but great bloodshed and wild confusion could result from attempts at such a change, and that they would surely fail. They were unfortunately right, and the march of fate could not be stayed. If this difficult personality could at the outset of his reign, drive even a genius and a giant like Bismarck to shipwreck, how could a lesser man hope for success? At the moment, when his colleagues in the Ministry noticed that there must be a break between Bismarck and his master, the former was deserted by precisely those whose confidence he had most completely earned by the labour of years and his gigantic success. Any man who entered the lists against the Emperor

in later years would as certainly have been left in the lurch.

No one could have struck a blow for truth and conviction without stirring up such strife. The first successor of the great Chancellor said in the Reichstag: "I am here by the orders of my Supreme Lord, and I will carry on the business of the Empire as he wishes, so long as I enjoy his confidence and receive his commands." A sergeant who has been entrusted with the defence of an outpost may talk like this, but not the highest responsible minister of the realm. Why did Parliament tolerate such unconstitutional talk? In doing so, it connived at the firm establishment of the power of the sovereign, from which nothing but disaster could result. Whether monarchy or republic, the supreme authority in the State must certainly be strong enough to preserve tranquillity and order, but never so strong as it was with us; for, if it is, the issue must sooner or later be misfortune and tragedy.

It was soon clear to me that such ideas as those here briefly touched upon were bringing me into violent conflict with the persons with whom, on account of my work and social duties, I was necessarily in daily contact. Thence there arose in me a feeling of isolation, and from this feeling in turn there sprang the need, at least now and again, to commune with myself on all that I saw. Such was the origin of the notes, collected in this book, which may, I think, be described as completely sincere dialogues with myself on all that I thought and could not mention to others.

It is not a diary that I kept. I only wrote down things, when I found time and opportunity in the

intervals of a life full of responsibility, trouble, and disquiet; but my entries were always made immediately after the events touched upon. Now and again I neglected to date them correctly, and I found it a matter of some difficulty to arrange such undated pages in due chronological order for the printer. To distinguish these passages, they are always indicated separately from the dated entries by three asterisks in place of a date, and I cannot be quite certain that I have always succeeded in putting each one into its proper place.

The reader may, however, rest assured that these paragraphs, like the rest, are reproduced exactly as they were written down under the living impressions of the events themselves. Whether it was exactly at the date at which they are inserted in the book, or whether a little later or a little earlier, is perhaps unimportant. I have deleted repetitions and suppressed several things that appear to me now of minor importance, and have also aimed at improving the style of what was hastily written down. But I would emphasise as strongly as possible that the fears which I expressed, and the gloomy views I took of the future, as well as the forecasts which I wrote almost subconsciously, were not interpolated afterwards, but had forced themselves on my mind as the immediate reflection of the events themselves at the time.

Far be it from me to wish to pose as a prophet, or as one who had clearer vision or greater foresight than his neighbours. On the contrary, my belief is that during this period my anxieties and conclusions were widely shared by others. As proof of this I need only mention the Memoirs of Count Waldersee and the

Reminiscences of Prince Eulenburg,[1] both of whom held public positions and offices, which should have made frank expression of opinion their duty. Yet of those who, like myself, had an office, but were not allowed to have an opinion; who had not intrigued for themselves but only worked; who could see and hear but dared not be seen or heard, none expressed such opinions, still less dared to write them down.

NIEDERGROSSENBORAU, *May* 1923.

[1] *Philip, Prince zu Eulenburg* (called by the Emperor "Phili"). Ambassador in Vienna. The Emperor's chief personal friend until he forfeited that position in consequence of the scandals in 1907, which are frequently mentioned in the course of the book itself.

TWELVE YEARS AT THE GERMAN IMPERIAL COURT

CHAPTER I

DIPLOMACY AND THE ARMY

1863–1898

I WAS born on the 16th August 1863 at Grossenborau, in the district of Liegnitz.[1] My father who, after about five years with the VIth Cuirassier Regiment and the Regiment of the *Gardes du Corps*, had left the service and married Fräulein Agnes von Rohrdannenwald, was at that time devoting himself exclusively to the administration of the Estate of Grossenborau, which my grandfather had bought for him.

He attracted general attention by his activities as a landowner and was President of the Provincial General Council, and Prince Bismarck tried to induce him to join the Civil Service. My father resisted for a long time, for he held the view that, in administering his own estate, he was useful to the community, and feared

[1] I began these jottings in or about the year 1900, when I first entered the service of the Court, purely in order to render an account to myself of my previous life at that critical point of my career. Of all that I then wrote in great detail about myself—my experiences, my travels, my friends, and my view of life—I have naturally included but little here. From the period immediately before that with which this book deals, I have retained only as much as throws light on myself and my development, so that the reader may at least have some idea who it is that is speaking to him. But as to the rest I was conscious all the time that in these memoirs—in contrast to others—it is not the writer that has the strongest claim on the reader's interest, but the things written about.

that as a servant of the State he would fail in his duties as owner of Grossenborau.

In the end, however, he yielded to pressure, and at the beginning of the 'eighties of last century became Governor of Oppeln. Later he was Governor of the Province of Posen, and subsequently Minister of Education. After the rejection of the Schools Law he retired, and again lived for several years in Grossenborau. After that he became Chief President of the Administrative Council of Hesse-Nassau, and finally, in August 1903, Governor of the Province of Silesia.

As my military duties did not give me full scope I sought occupation elsewhere, and began to busy myself with independent studies. I was able to overcome such obstacles as Society and the Service put in my way: I was, in fact, only confirmed in my decision by difficulty and opposition. My intellectual pursuits somewhat took the edge off my interest in my career, and there were times when I felt anxious to leave the Service.

What I should have liked best of all was to go to America and win my independence as a self-made man. I cherished this wish for many years, and I expressed it often and urgently to my father; but his melancholy face, whenever I discussed any such scheme with him, and his adroit opposition, always resulted in postponement or delay, and finally in the total abandonment of my plans.

In the hope of weaning me from these ideas, and partly also in order to gratify my desire to go far afield, my father proposed that I should apply for a post at the Embassy in Rome. Consequently, I was ordered to Rome from the 1st February 1887 to the 1st February 1888. The Ambassador, Herr von

Keudell, personally directed my preliminary training for the diplomatic career, and took the friendliest interest in me throughout. Unfortunately, he had already begun to suspect that his position was not too secure, and when he felt himself slighted by the treatment of a certain report which he had sent to Berlin, and by the disapproval of the opinions he had expressed, he sent in his resignation. At the bottom of his heart he relied on his long-standing intimacy with the house of Bismarck, and was confident that his resignation would not be accepted, and that, on the contrary, his position would only be strengthened. As a matter of fact, however, his resignation came very opportunely, and was accepted at once.[1]

The change of Ambassadors was a great loss to me. First of all there was an interregnum of about three months, during which the Councillor of the Embassy, Count Goltz, acted as Chargé d'Affaires. This gentleman had no particular interest in me, nor had he any qualities which could further my development. He united in his person two characteristic qualities of the "little diplomat." He carried caution in conversation to the extreme, and was therefore in constant terror lest he had said anything rash. Further, he treated the most petty and least important things with a solemnity which bordered on the ridiculous. I remember, for instance, that at a small dinner given by a certain Madame le Ghait—who had a *salon*, which was very interesting to us diplomatists, and kept open house every day—some quite unimportant but aristocratic

[1] Later Herbert Bismarck told me in a friendly conversation that the resignation was extremely fortunate, both for his father and himself, since it had been long intended to secure von Keudell's retirement, but no one had had the courage to suggest it to the old gentleman. Thus von Keudell had acted exactly as the Wilhelmstrasse wished.—*Author's Note.*

Roman idlers, out of mere curiosity, cross-examined him about certain diplomatic events. Very soon he found he could fence with their questions no longer; in the end he quite lost his head, and with a red face and in an excited voice he shouted: "*Mon cher comte, je préférerais énormément de ne pas du tout causer politique.*"

One day he sent for me and told me, with an air of great solemnity and with many exhortations to preserve the utmost discretion, a piece of news that he had received—a very important piece of news, he said! He then told me to convey this momentous information personally to the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires without delay. This gentleman was greatly astonished, and finally took up a copy of the *Popolo Romano* and showed me that this mysterious and important piece of news had already been printed on the evening before in the Italian official Government journal.

At that time we were on the most intimate terms with the Austrian Embassy, and as Goltz had plenty of zeal, but very little confidence in himself, it was a matter of great difficulty for him to decide to send a report to Berlin. As a rule, he asked every one of his colleagues, down to myself, the youngest, for advice, and last of all he invariably went round to the Austrian Ambassador, Baron Bruck, read the report to him, and asked him his opinion. If the great "Wauwau"—as we younger diplomatists used to call Prince Bismarck—had known that every document that came to him from his representative in Rome had already been shown to the Austrian Ambassador, Heaven only knows what would have happened. Goltz was neither able to express the simplest things in decent German, nor had he ever mastered orthography or punctuation.

In the autumn of 1887 Count Solms, who had till then been Ambassador in Madrid, was appointed Ambassador in Rome. He was a man of parts, much admired as a pianist, and generally recognised as an amateur painter of some talent. Personally, he was amiable and had great social gifts. We frequently saw von Schlözer, the Ambassador to the Holy See, and also Herr von Lindenau, the Secretary to this Embassy. I was particularly interested in the latter, as he was unusually able, industrious and serious, though delicate and consequently hypochondriacal.

The greatest houses of Roman Society were open to us, and we were frequent visitors at the palaces of the Colonna, Doria, Massimo, Avella, Sermoneta and other noble families. The Marchioness Lavaggi, Countess Bruschi, the Austrian Ambassador Baron Bruck, and Madame le Ghait held open house for us every evening. The last named was known as "Tante Lustig" (Aunt Merry), and as a matter of fact the freedom and *sans-gêne* which ruled in her salons were unusual even in Rome.

The ladies of Rome were the real heads of their establishments as far as Society was concerned, frequently received in great style without the master of the house ever appearing, and mostly had the appearance and manners of the great world, but they were quite unimportant politically, and often uncultivated. A lover — of course, with strict observance of the surface proprieties—was almost universally tolerated, but frequent changes of lovers were disapproved of as immoral.

Although a certain amount of card-playing went on in the drawing-rooms of these ladies, the stakes were always modest and kept within the strictest limits; but

at the "Caccia" Club, where I spent a good deal of time, there was reckless gambling. Diplomatists, artists, scholars, literary men, and dignitaries of the church, as well as the main body of the Italian nobility, together with many others from every quarter of the globe who happened to be in Rome, offered excellent opportunities for intellectual society to anyone who cared to make use of them.

I frequently obtained leave, which gave me the chance of visiting the whole of Italy, Sicily and Sardinia.

In the year 1889 I was appointed Adjutant to the 2nd Battalion of the 1st Regiment of Infantry of the Guards. During this time Prince Frederick Leopold of Prussia was in command for about five months. Once during the manœuvres, when he was still commanding the 4th Company, he lodged a complaint against me with the Commanding Officer that I had ridden past him so quickly and so close to him that he was bespattered with mud. As Regimental Commander, however, he was anxious to be on good terms with his Adjutant, and we never had any difficulties.

The Prince had so little real interest in the service that he allowed the plan for drill to be written down for him; and what he preferred was to read out the orders, line for line as they stood; but even so he sometimes lost his place in the text on parade, and would ask me quite unabashed, "What's next?" I then whispered to him what the next word of command in the programme was, which he would then simply repeat aloud, and so managed to cut quite a decent figure. He also got others to work out the problems for field service in every detail, and often asked me at manœuvres, "What had I better say when I have to give my

award?" Then like a good boy he would repeat exactly what I told him.

It was not that he was actually wanting in ability—it was really that he had no interest in the matter; but it was dreadful to hear him, now and again, scold a common soldier or a non-commissioned officer. There was something so contemptuous and offensive in his whole manner, and he used such insulting language that one could only deplore the impression he was likely to make on all concerned.

As long as he was a bachelor he was very hospitable and always invited six or eight officers to dinner. They used to drink so much that the evenings degenerated into orgies. The Prince himself generally fell asleep in his arm-chair after drinking too freely, and the evening ended in everybody slinking on tiptoe out of the room for fear of disturbing him.

His toilet was fearful and wonderful. It took an incredible time and he spent fantastic sums on it. Once when he fainted on parade, because his clothes were too tight, it was discovered that nothing could be undone, since he was sewn in from head to foot. Once he mounted his horse and his breeches were so tight that they split. The same thing happened with four successive pairs; it was only the fifth that held fast, and even then he had to mount with the utmost circumspection.

Whenever he had to be on duty at six o'clock in the morning, he always declared that he had had to get up at two o'clock. He spent an hour over shaving, and the rest of the time was taken with the bath, the perfuming of his person, and other details.

On the 1st April 1892 I was seconded for a year to the Regiment of Cuirassiers of the Life Guards. The reason

was that my father was anxious to have me nearer to our estates, which would in the course of nature be mine and which he, being a Minister, was forced at that time to neglect a little.

When I returned from Breslau life became somewhat more interesting, as I was one of the Senior 1st Lieutenants, and often had opportunities of commanding the Company. In this way I trained and commanded at review the 9th Company in the spring of 1894, and the 11th Company in the spring of 1895.

On the 1st June 1894 I had six months' leave, and this I devoted to making myself acquainted with English society, to which I had the best introductions. I went through Cowes week and then went to the United States, where I was particularly impressed by American agricultural methods. I have a pleasant recollection of an excursion to Yellowstone Park, and a flying visit to the Flathead Indians. I finally got as far as San Francisco, and got back to New York by way of Salt Lake City, Denver, St Louis and Washington.

On the 12th September 1895 I became a Supernumerary Captain on the strength of the Regiment. It was a special privilege to be allowed to remain, as there was at that time, in view of my age, very small chance of my ever obtaining a Company. I was probably indebted for this in the first place to the Regimental Commander, Colonel von Kessel. In the autumn of 1895 I was also temporarily appointed Town Major, which was a further proof of the interest he took in me.

In the spring of 1906 another Supernumerary Captain was transferred to the 3rd Regiment of the Guards, and after the Spring Parade I obtained the 9th Company, which was then vacant.

Whilst I was acting as Town Major I was involved in a well-known episode—the arrest of Prince Frederick Leopold of Prussia by the order of the Emperor. In virtue of my function I had to draw up the instructions for the sentries and the guards who were in charge of the Prince. As I had been his Adjutant until a few years previously, it was a curious meeting. I devoted my best energies to my Company, and I look back at that time with satisfaction, for the feeling of responsibility, and the independence which Colonel von Kalkstein allowed us, made my work one of the pleasantest of my recollections.

As a Company-Commander I came into contact with the rank and file. I particularly noticed how much higher the standard of education of the new levies was than that which I had known as a young officer in command of recruits. The intervening years had clearly worked a great change in the mass of the people. One could not fail to see that my men's independence of judgment, as well as their self-respect, had greatly developed. In painful contrast were the demands made on the men, which had undergone no change. Our ways of treating them had certainly not improved.

CHAPTER II

A PRINCELY ESTABLISHMENT

TO my regret, I had to resign my Company on the 1st February 1898, as I was appointed personal Adjutant to Prince Joachim Albrecht of Prussia. This appointment was, no doubt, something like a vote of confidence and a distinction. Nevertheless, I undertook my new duties with mixed feelings. At that time Prince Joachim Albrecht, together with Prince Friedrich Heinrich,[1] his brother, had joined the 1st Regiment of Dragoon Guards.

A royal Prince's period of service is meant not only to initiate him into army routine, but also to influence his education through the keen sense of duty and honour of which daily contact with his brother officers should give him a good example. It is hoped, too, that he will have opportunities of frank untrammelled intercourse which will rub off the corners, and give him an insight into the facts of actual life.

In the 1st Regiment of the Dragoon Guards these objects were hardly attained at all. The presence of a number of young men whose only desire it was to wear brilliant uniforms for a short time, the slowness of promotion and the enormous number of exchanges, made any feeling of unity or *esprit de corps* among the officers impossible. But the worst thing was that Colonel von Falkenhayn, who may well have had the best intentions in regard to the reform of many abuses

[1] Sons of Prince Albrecht of Prussia. See p. 12.

but certainly seldom hit on the right way of doing it, was on very bad terms with his officers. Till I had experienced it, I could hardly have believed such conditions possible. The best proof was the mess. On an average the company consisted of two junior lieutenants and one ensign. It was quite a rare exception for one or two first-lieutenants to appear at dinner. One hour after the meal even those had vanished and gone to look after their own affairs or find amusement in the town.

Any friendly intercourse in the usual sense of the word, any benefit to the younger men from the good example of their seniors was out of the question. Of course all the officers assembled at the weekly Wednesday concert, but only with many guests. Most of the evenings were almost rowdy—much drink, much noise, and after dinner a dance or cards.

On the two Princes such a collection of officers had fatal effects. They had only just become independent and had their adjutants given them. Until then they had been carefully guarded by tutors or military governors; now they had passed from control and were suddenly launched into life. Intercourse with intelligent comrades would have been a blessing for them, but the transition to a life such as they actually found was too abrupt.

Prince Joachim Albrecht's character was frivolous enough. He often fell into very bad company and became entangled in affairs which caused me more trouble than my wildest experiences in my own days of storm and stress. It seemed absolutely impossible to keep him in decent company. But I often tried to gain his confidence and to act as a restraining influence,

or to help him with good advice in awkward situations; and I flatter myself that, in spite of many explosions, I succeeded fairly well.

To the many lectures that I had to give him, but in which as far as possible I avoided any show of severity, he often listened very quietly. Only twice in the five years he said: "How dare you lecture me like this; after all, you are my Adjutant and have to execute my orders." My answer was that the Emperor would, quite rightly, at once relieve of his functions any Adjutant who looked on obedience as his only duty in such a position of trust. Once or twice, however, I was obliged to resort to threats.

My relations with Prince Albrecht,[1] the father of the Princes, were among the difficulties of my position. He was the soul of loyalty, but very ignorant of the world, and in all difficult moments chivalry and benevolence were his only guides. It is due to these qualities of his that I more than once emerged with credit from complications from which I could see no escape. He directed the education of his two eldest sons, simply from the point of view of a superior; and as he had strict moral principles the Princes were driven into a pretence of submission and hypocrisy. The pressure he exercised was strengthened by a certain hereditary self-righteousness. Like others of such high rank, the Prince had remained a stranger to many human and natural relationships. All this made it particularly painful for me to have to discuss the love-affairs of his sons with him. Unfortunately I could not avoid it, but whenever the wiles and deceits of the daughters of

[1] *Prince Albrecht.* Grandson of King Frederick William III. of Prussia, who was the Kaiser's great-grandfather. Prince Regent of Brunswick from 1885.

Eve threatened mischief, I thought it my duty to warn Prince Joachim Albrecht as best I could. I can honestly add that I often told him most emphatically that I should not hesitate to go over to the other side if in my opinion any woman had really been wronged, or if there were any question of a woman who might still be compromised.[1]

Prince Joachim Albrecht kept house together with his elder brother Prince Frederick Henry. Each one of the Princes had an annual sum of £1500 as "*apanage*" from the Royal Crown Treasury; and in addition Prince Albrecht allowed each of his sons £1500. The Princes had inherited a further income of about £900, so that the total annual income of the common household fund was roughly £6900. Out of this they had to cover all expenses of the household, including kitchen, stables, dress and travelling. For expenses of a purely private nature Prince Joachim Albrecht also had a capital of about £4000, the interest on which amounted to not quite £150, while Prince Frederick Henry also had about £500 a year at his disposal.

As the characters of the two Princes were very different, a good many difficulties were caused by their having a joint establishment. Although at first both Princes lived in the same wing of Prince Albrecht's palace in the Wilhelmstrasse, they saw each other comparatively seldom, yet each interfered with the other's household arrangements. This naturally resulted in differences which the staff did not find it easy to settle. Often they could not even arrange to have

[1] I entered into some of these affairs in detail in my Memoranda, but I do not think it right to stir up these old scandals here, and content myself with these hints.—*Author's Note.*

their meals at the same time; and as there was only one common dining-room there was a certain amount of friction.

Still more troublesome were the financial consequences of this joint housekeeping. It was all so like a Chinese puzzle, that often it was difficult to say how much each Prince had spent upon himself. Thus unconsciously each of them was persuaded that he was being robbed for the benefit of his brother, and that when he was economising it was not he but his brother who was benefiting. This arrangement was not a good training for them. It had a bad effect on their characters; it resulted in disputes between the two Princes, and made it impossible for them ever to understand what economy really means.

I had constantly pointed out these disadvantages during the five years I held office, but it was only in the last half-year that I could effect the separation of accounts. From the educational point of view, too, it was a mistake for it to have been my business to submit the accounts of the two Princes to their father. One of the results was, naturally enough, that the young Princes' interest in the management of the household flagged. They said to themselves: "We spend our money, and afterwards it is the Count's affair to settle about it with our father."

One of the reasons why at a Court comparatively little is done with ample resources often is that the princely personages are too apt to avoid trouble by saying "yes" to any requests or proposals of their servants. The latter, of course, use this weakness to their advantage. The tradesmen give them secret commissions, and it is very hard to bring them to book. Furthermore, disputes with tradesmen are

among the things that princely personages particularly dislike.

It happened once, for instance, that a barber charged the absurd price of three marks a day for shaving and hair-dressing, and in spite of that, added monthly bills of £3. 10s. to £4 for pomatum and hair-wash. Although it was pointed out to Prince Joachim Albrecht that these bills could not be correct, it was only after some years that I could obtain his leave to dismiss this barber.

The imperial court tailors took such advantage of him that in one year they sent in a bill of £900 for clothes to Prince Frederick Henry alone. Other firms were responsible for a part of this total, but this item in the royal accounts remained at this giddy height for several years. I insisted often enough that such a figure was unconscionable and there must be a change, but all my protests were ignored; and, as long as I had no authority, I hesitated, for quite natural reasons, to take any energetic steps.

The actual honesty of such methods was revealed on a subsequent occasion, when Prince Joachim Albrecht had had some special material for smart waistcoats for mufti presented to him. The tailors made this up, and actually charged him £2. 14s. per waistcoat. I explained to the Prince that this price was so exorbitant that it verged on dishonesty. I begged him to give no more orders to the firm unless they took a substantial amount off the bill. The Prince made a fuss about this, but he finally gave way. I then went to their shop and asked why they charged such a monstrous price. I was told the wages were so high and it was impossible to do it more cheaply. Then I said, " If wages are so high I should be greatly obliged

if you would show me in your books how much you have paid in this particular case." They tried to refuse, and said it was quite unusual to allow customers to examine the firm's accounts. It was then my turn to say that that would not satisfy me, and that unless the books were produced immediately they need expect no further orders from the establishment of the Princes. They finally realised that I was serious, and, after all, the custom of a prince is always worth having. Anyway the books were produced, and it appeared that 17s. was ample for the wages. I therefore said that I considered 22s. a reasonable price for each waistcoat, to which the tailors finally agreed.

Another significant little incident. I noticed that Prince Joachim received an annual bill for twenty odd pairs of new military gloves. I then discovered that one of the valets used to send the gloves, after they had been used once, to non-commissioned officers of all kinds of regiments. First of all I naturally regarded it as quite wrong that a footman of the Prince should carry on business in gloves; and secondly, I could not approve of throwing away gloves worth 8s. which ordinary people wore for years. I tried to make the Prince understand this, but he defended his valet, and said he could surely make the man a present of gloves now and again if he chose, and then no one could prevent the man from doing what he liked with gloves that had been given him. It must not be forgotten that persons like this valet are sometimes quite a serious danger to anyone who has to manage a princely establishment.

The staff of the palace consisted of a steward, two valets, two footmen, two *chasseurs du corps*, three boots, a female cook (later a male cook), and a kitchen assistant. Two and sometimes three women were

engaged by the day for clearing up, washing, etc., but were not permanently employed. In the stables a coachman, two grooms, and two carriage-washers were permanently employed; and one groom and two or three other men were called in when occasion required. When two Princes, living in a palace, wish to be in a position at any hour of day or night to receive guests, even Royalty, and to drive out in a royal carriage with a *chasseur* or footman on the box, they cannot do with fewer servants. Prince Albrecht was anxious that there should be no difference between the wages of his sons' servants and those of his own; but he was in a very splendid financial position, whereas the income of his sons was barely sufficient.

When I look back on those five years in which I had to manage the affairs of this household, I say to myself that I learnt something of the difficulties of a Court. I am glad I was often forced in those years to adapt myself to quite new and strange conditions, for I gained experiences which were afterwards invaluable.

I also have a grateful recollection of Prince Joachim Albrecht. It is true he made many things none too easy, but on the other hand he had the friendliest feelings for me, and came into closer human relationship with me than one could have expected from a princely personage.

One day in April 1892 Prince Joachim Albrecht unexpectedly showed me a telegram from his father, the Prince Regent, informing him that he was ordered by His Imperial Majesty to meet him on the journey to Spain for the celebration of the attainment of his majority by King Alfonso XIII. The Princes were delighted at this prospect of visiting Spain. I had often desired to travel in that country, and I had taken a special interest

in its literature. Accordingly the Princes left Berlin at 1 p.m. that day. We were met in the train by Lieutenant-General von Moltke (later Chief of the General Staff of the Army), who was also taking part in the journey by the orders of His Imperial Majesty. At Magdeburg Colonel Dehn von Rothfelser, in command of the 66th Regiment of Infantry, joined us. At Brunswick the official journey began, and we changed into the Prince Regent's saloon. Here we found the Court Chamberlain, von der Osten, the Adjutants, von der Schulenburg and Berge von Herndorf, and the Chief of the Medical Staff, Dr Keitel. We took our meals together; they were quite informal and, from a material point of view, excellent—all of which made travelling very easy.

At 8.30 a.m. on the 14th May we were in Paris, where the Ambassador and the gentlemen of the Embassy received us. . . . At the Embassy we lunched. From the Gare d'Orléans we travelled by way of Orléans, Tours, Poitiers, and Bordeaux to Irun. This was a delightful journey through fruitful, smiling landscapes. Magical is the charm of Touraine. . . .

Wonderful roads and canals traverse the country, and property and land are distributed almost equally everywhere. As a result, we have the ceaseless toil of the owner, and its fruits. Thrift, industry, prosperity and order are conspicuous qualities by which even the most careless casual traveller cannot fail to be struck.

At about 11 o'clock in the evening we reached Irun, on the Spanish frontier. The royal personages were here received officially by His Excellency Sr. Conde de Pie de Concha Segundo, Introducer of Ambassadors. The court train was in readiness. Here, unfortunately,

we had our first experience of certain Spanish peculiarities. No detailed instructions had been given for our accommodation, such as we always work out for longer journeys, but only the most sketchy directions. As space was very limited, even the royal party got into some confusion, and they grumbled not a little. Four of us had to spend the night in one sleeping compartment. This would not have mattered in itself, except that on such occasions the most varied collection of civil and military uniforms must always be close at hand. In this case, for instance, we had to be in full-dress uniform when we left the train in Madrid. There was simply no room for our luggage, and how to dress was a problem.

A singular thing was that the ordinary express, which we left on entering the royal train, and which started from the frontier about an hour later than our train, arrived a few hours before us in Madrid: besides which it was, as we discovered later, almost empty. Our train travelled very slowly, stopping at every place of the smallest importance. I only mention San Sebastian, Vittoria, Burgos, Vallodolid, and Escorial. At all these stations there was a large crowd on the platform, and the heads of the civil and military authorities were present in full-dress uniform. As no one ever got in or out of the train, and the royal personages never received anyone, we really could not understand why there was all this to-do. In Madrid I had an opportunity of asking Count Concha the reason. He explained that greater speed would have been undignified, and that explicit orders had been given for these receptions at the platforms by day and by night. He had had no instructions to see that the royal personages took any notice of the compliment, but had been

himself commanded to convey to the authorities the thanks of the princely visitors. As we had ample opportunities of observing later, all this was truly Spanish. . . .

In spite of the great solemnity with which the journey and the receptions had been carried out, a good deal of our luggage went astray. I myself lost two trunks, but luckily I had my uniform with me, so that I could appear at the gala dinner in proper style. When we met in the Prince Regent's saloon there was great excitement. Messengers had been sent out in every direction, but the missing luggage had not been traced, and as luck would have it, his Chain and Ribbon of the Golden Fleece were among it. The agitation grew from moment to moment; but after all it was not unamusing for an impartial observer. Finally, everybody, though in the utmost despair, bowed to the inevitable—as mere mortals always must.

The gala dinner of one hundred and eight persons in one of the salons was extremely brilliant. Funnily enough, my chair broke down under me after I had been seated for a short time. Without delay a second chair was given me. When it came to the roast I somehow unconsciously lent against the arm of the chair, and this one broke also. Then I received a third chair. I should have found it very embarrassing if, among so many strangers, my third chair had broken down also, but it held out.

On the 16th in the morning we had a reception, which lasted about an hour and a half, at H.R.H. the Regent's. It was about half-past ten when the Guard was mounted. It is a very dignified function—one battalion, one battery and one squadron took part. We could not help noticing how the troops assembled

long before the time and stood about doing nothing. The mounting of the Guard itself was carried out with great solemnity and in very slow time. On the whole a pretty sight, but from the military point of view it had very little sense.

We then drove through Madrid to the Prado. The effect of this priceless collection of pictures is simply overwhelming. In comparison, the Louvre, the Hermitage in St Petersburg, and even the famous Pitti Palace in Florence fade into insignificance. Velasquez, Murillo, Goya and Zurbaran especially excited my admiration. At noon there was the military banquet, and after that a *cercle* with the Royalties. Then we again drove in full uniform to pay visits. After this we walked for two hours in the Jardino Buen Retiro, and at 8.30 there was a banquet at the German Embassy. . . .

The Review was quite an interesting sight, but I had not thought that my expectations, small as they were, could be disappointed. I have seen Russian, French, Austrian, Italian. Swiss, English and American troops, but the Spanish soldiers are a class by themselves, and unfortunately a lower one.

On the 20th in the morning I went through the Armeria, one of the world's largest collections of armour. It is full of things of great historical interest, and the many suits of armour for children, worn by celebrated kings and princes when young, are curious. Then I visited the magnificent and enormous royal stables. . . .

On the same day we had also the opening of a big Gallery, and the beautiful Battle of Flowers, in the Buen Retiro. Such splendour of colour and blossom, such infinite variety of taste, I had never seen. The interest and animation with which the masses of the people

joined in the festivity are possible only in the South. The King himself flung flowers with the greatest energy. Suddenly, at a certain moment when all the baskets behind him were empty, without hesitation he tore a tall hat from the head of one of his footmen and threw it in place of the flowers at some ladies who at the moment were passing by and smothering him in petals. It is hardly possible for us to imagine the cheers of enthusiasm which this little event called forth.

In the morning of the 21st we inspected the barracks of the *Lanciers du Prince*. The dirt and disorder were not excessive, but the accommodation for the horses was very bad. In order to economise straw, they stood on the bare floors so close together that they could seldom lie down. They were hobbled with rope in a way which would hardly satisfy a German horse-dealer as a makeshift for a three days' fair. They had the audacity to show us two Mounted Companies. German recruits are better trained after three months. The want of skill in horsemanship was incredible.

In the afternoon, from two to eight o'clock, we enjoyed the Corrida de Toros. It was a Gala Performance, in which even officers on active service took part, and nine bulls were killed. . . . For the large majority of the spectators (18,000 in this case) it is a worthless and brutalising sport. In the evening there was a dinner in the Palace, after which a very long farewell *cercle*, and a midnight supper in the " Navio Club " with the Duke Arion and some Spanish notables. It was nearly four o'clock in the morning before we could get home. . . .

CHAPTER III

CONTROLLER OF THE HOUSEHOLD

ON the 11th March, 1903, as I was exercising my horses as usual in the courtyard of the Ministry of War on the Prince Albrecht Strasse, one of the footmen of Prince Albrecht's household came to me, to tell me that Count Eulenburg, the Controller of the Imperial Household and High Steward,[1] had telephoned asking me to call on him between eleven and one o'clock at the Royal Palace.

As I was driving to the Palace I wondered what affairs of my Prince made a conversation necessary, and I was worried by more or less uncomfortable conjectures. It never entered into my head that it might be anything concerning myself.

I was so astonished that I hardly knew what to say when Count Eulenburg began, "We are making a change in the Controller's department. Herr von Trotha has been made Controller of the Household of the Crown Prince. We have considered various possible candidates for the post of a Controller of the Household of His Majesty, and we can think of no one better than yourself. I have His Imperial Majesty's commands to ask you whether you would be prepared to undertake the post of Controller of his Household."

My astonishment soon gave place to a certain anxiety; would it be possible, I asked myself, to do justice to

[1] *Count August Eulenburg* was promoted to the post of *Hausminister* in 1907 (see below), and held that office till the Kaiser's abdication.

this post which I knew was very exacting and responsible? It seemed hard to decide to give up my military career so suddenly. I thought sorrowfully of my family, of which I should see a great deal less than I had done in the past. (In the year 1889, after having been adjutant to Prince Albrecht for a year, I had married Fräulein Olga Bürgers, and had at that time two boys.) On the other hand I said to myself that I should prejudice my prospects in the army, for a long time at any rate, if I were to refuse such an offer; and finally I realised that to entrust to me, at the age of thirty-nine, duties so interesting, so responsible, and so varied, and with an office so advantageous from the material point of view, amounted to a vote of confidence.

After thinking these matters over for a few moments, I said to Count Eulenburg that I was ready to undertake the Controllership which he had offered me.

When I informed Prince Albrecht that I had been appointed Controller of the Emperor's, he became very excited and said, "How can they take you away from me in this way? I won't stand it." I must say it was not quite correct to take his adjutant away from a Prince like this, but, probably, they had foreseen that he might object, and confronted him with a *fait accompli*. On the whole, in spite of the many difficulties I met with, I have pleasant memories of the time I spent with Prince Albrecht. We should judge him leniently, for he had had no training for life, and had been spoiled in so many ways, and not a little by reason of his musical gifts and of his good looks. Even an ordinary man would have found it dangerous to be smothered in laurel wreaths at the early age of twenty-one by ladies of the highest rank whenever he appeared

at a concert. There was even a time when he bore the pet name of " Fairy Prince."

The next step was that I was relieved of my position as personal adjutant of H.R.H. Prince Albrecht of Prussia, from the 1st April 1903, and transferred to the Controller's department. My definite appointment as Controller followed as early as the 8th May, when I had to report for the first time at the Royal Palace in Strassburg and to do my first spell of duty in that office. By a strange chance, it was also in Strassburg, just twenty years before, that I had had a telegram containing the news of my first commission.

Several big functions were in progress in Strassburg, and especially interesting was an excursion to the Hochkönigsburg. It is certainly a fascinating idea, stimulating and instructive from the artistic point of view, to restore to its former splendour a huge castle so magnificently situated. But is it really possible to reconstruct it so completely as to give us a real idea of what the castle looked like at any particular moment in the past, and will such things help our appreciation of history? Above all, is it important enough to justify the spending of millions of marks on bringing a corpse to life again?

The Emperor went via Bitsch, where manœuvres were being held, to Metz, and the Empress arrived there simultaneously. The consecration of the new great door of the Cathedral was to take place with great pomp and ceremony.

The carefully arranged programme said:

" The Bishop has the honour humbly to invite their Imperial Majesties graciously to betake themselves to the Cathedral, and to beg that they will seat themselves on seats prepared for their All Highest Persons in the

Choir, to the right of the High Altar. The Legate will take his place to the left of His Majesty the Emperor, and the Stattholder to the right of Her Majesty."

It had also been settled verbally that the seat of the Legate (Cardinal Kopp) as well as the seat of the Stattholder (Prince Hohenlohe)[1] should be placed a little further back and one step lower. But in defiance of these arrangements the Legate, instead of taking his place to the left of the Emperor and Empress, occupied a seat almost opposite them, under a gorgeous canopy and slightly higher than their Majesties, and from there he conducted the service and pronounced the benediction.

On the 15th May in the evening their Majesties went to the Château of Urville. Here we led a quite pleasant country life. On some days there were inspections and manœuvres of the garrison of Metz. The chief military and civil authorities were invited to the midday meal. In the evenings there were quite intimate little gatherings. The Emperor told us a great deal of the conditions at the Italian and Greek Courts, and displayed an astonishingly keen gift of observation. He constantly dwelt, whatever the subject, on the importance of "order" in all things, insisting that there must be one dominant will. Everything must to a certain extent go by rule; even art and artists must be disciplined. All this kind of thing he said again and again. It is easy to see in Germany the Police State *par excellence*. Everything is either "ordered" or "forbidden." This explains our great successes, and also our sudden and extraordinary mischances.

On the 20th May we returned to the New Palace in Potsdam.

[1] *Prince Hermann Hohenlohe-Langenburg*, Stattholder, 1894-1907

* * *

During the summer of 1903 the Court was in residence at the New Palace. At the end of June and the beginning of July we went to Kiel Week on H.M. Yacht *Hohenzollern* in the Bay of Kiel. Later followed the journey to the North, during which His Excellency Herr von Lyncker[1] was on duty. . . .

Since I have been at Court I have had many opportunities of observing Count Bülow, the Imperial Chancellor, at the closest quarters, especially in the New Palace. He is certainly an exceptional and striking personality. He combines great amiability, strength of character and adroitness, with the charm of one of the most graceful *causeurs* that I have ever met. But I found, curiously enough, how often, in spite of these fascinating and often quite irresistible gifts, which give one the feeling that here at last we have a man "above the pressure and weight of the surrounding atmosphere," there came moments in which all faith in his strength of character was destroyed. No one could fail to admire—though it shook one's confidence—the inconceivable skill with which he would almost imperceptibly shift his ground whenever he had inadvertently expressed an opinion which did not quite find favour with the Emperor, and veer to his side.

At times, however, it happened that even this past master of polite conversation would go just a little too far. At such times the Emperor would fix him with a penetrating glance, and would suddenly break in, and—at once or after a few moments—brusquely state his own opinion, which admitted neither of doubt

[1] *Moritz Freiherr von Lyncker.* At that time one of the Controllers (see p. 44). In 1908 appointed *General Adjutant*, or Chief Equerry to the Emperor, later Chief of the Military Cabinet; in July 1918 President of the Supreme Military Tribunal (*Reichsmilitärgericht*).

nor contradiction. As soon as he saw this look, and heard this tone, this adroitest of courtiers would relapse into devout silence, till he found a chance of once more insinuating himself unobtrusively into the conversation. At such moments the extraordinary gifts and the exceptional will-power of the Emperor impressed me more strongly than ever.

His actual power, which even from the first was quite unlimited, was now developing step by step into purely personal and arbitrary rule. Ministers and police simply received orders which they executed without question, without seriously considering whether they were legal or constitutional. Sometimes, however —but rarely enough—the bogey of an interpellation and possible difficulties with the legislative body gave them pause.

The effects of this absolutism are already to be observed most clearly in the Army, where rigid organisation is carried to extremes. During the Imperial manœuvres it is not uncommon for a completely new set of commands to be issued to the troops on an average three times in one night; but no one even dares to hint that this causes confusion, upsets important dispositions, necessitates fatiguing marches, makes insuperable difficulties for the commissariat, and may even mean a food shortage for the troops.

Spectacular effects are all that seem to matter. Artillery preparation is quite neglected, the Staffs and the Artillery ride into the trenches, and the Cavalry attacks in a way that would be ingenuous even if the German Army were still armed only with harmless blunderbusses. Even when the umpires are giving their awards, the whole crowd will wait for a long time in the middle of a root crop, as if money were no object. Every-

body knows how mischievous all this is, but no one dares to utter a word, least of all Count Schlieffen,[1] the Chief of the General Staff. Not a soul ventures to whisper a critical objection, but there are not wanting men in very high, even in the highest positions, who seize every opportunity of assuring His Majesty that everything had been interesting, instructive and magnificent. Can we wonder that illusions are created, even in this most powerful of brains, that a consciousness of unlimited power is developing, and that orders are often issued for no other reason than because, as Louis of France said : "*Tel est mon plaisir.*"

* * *

I found the stay in Rominten in the autumn of 1903 (24th September to 6th October) extremely interesting. The Rominter Heide, which extends over 95,000 acres, is one of the finest hunting domains in Germany. It is beautifully timbered, and the heath has a thick growth not only of pines and firs, but of many other trees. The landscape is undulating, and occasionally higher hills rise abruptly from pleasant meadows encircled with woods, through which the Rominte and other streams pursue their winding course. Some lakes, for instance the Marinower Lake, are among the beauty spots of this magnificent domain. Impenetrable brakes with marshy subsoil, as well as tracts of completely virgin forest, give the country a charm of its own.

Traditionally this was a favourite hunting ground of the Great Elector, and the foundations of a shooting-box designed by him are to be seen to this day. In the centre of this beautiful domain, over which no one else is allowed to shoot (apart from the necessary thinning

[1] *Count Alfred von Schlieffen,* Chief of the General Staff, 1891-1905, succeeding Count Waldersee.

out of the animals in the winter), the Emperor built a very cleverly and prettily designed shooting-box in Norwegian style. On the occasion of which I write the guests present included: Prince Eulenburg, Prince Dohna,[1] Count Dohna-Waldburg, Admiral von Hollmann, and two equerries, Captain von Grumme and Major von Friedeburg. Various Ministers from Berlin appeared to seek audience for one or two days, and some of the Head Foresters and occasionally the chief authorities of the Province were invited.

Beautiful as this domain was, it had already lost too much of its natural character to please my taste. All the chief foresters' houses and other important points were connected by telephone with the shooting-box. A perfect army of forestry officials were busy, on cycles, in carriages, on horseback and on foot, so that every point in any way worth observation was carefully watched day and night, and the most detailed reports could be received at any hour of the twenty-four from every part of the domain. In most of the sections there were so many footpaths, shooting-stands and shelters, that very often I could not help regretting that such a magnificent forest had been turned into something so artificial.

It was very pleasant for us to have free use of so many carriages and horses, and I had an opportunity of getting to know the whole district in the course of many rides, drives, and walks in the morning or the afternoon, as the necessities of the service permitted. The Emperor went stalking from any time between four o'clock in the morning and dusk, according to the news he had from the Head Foresters. As many as

[1] *Prince Dohna.* An East Prussian Magnate, raised to the rank of Prince in 1900.

four royal stags were shot. His Majesty had no fewer than twelve unsuccessful stalks in pursuit of one twenty-pointer, who was finally brought to bay and shot on the last day.

The rejoicings on this occasion were quite extraordinary. Prince Dohna and I had been near the place on horse-back, and we were fortunate enough to arrive at the spot soon after the stag had been brought down. The childlike delight of the Emperor was amazing. He gave orders immediately to distribute everything eatable and drinkable, which was in a van close by, among all the hunt servants; he asked more than once whether everything had been disposed of, and he gave each of the beaters an extra gratuity of ten marks with his own hands. Everybody inspected the stag again and again, and Professor Friese, who had hurried to the spot in a carriage, was commanded to take every possible kind of photograph.

The Chief Forester, Baron Speck von Sternburg, had during this time been forcing on His Majesty's notice one of his brothers-in-law, a young probationer in forestry named von Dresler, who was learning the craft with him, and represented this young man to the Emperor as indispensable. As Probationer von Dresler was about to enter on a year of service with the Rifles of the Guards, the Baron succeeded in extracting from His Majesty an order that he should put off joining his battalion till after the Emperor had left Rominten.

I was quite prepared to find that in this state of exaltation the Emperor would go out of his way to show some special favour to this probationer to please Baron Speck von Sternburg. I was just trying to make up my mind to suggest a pair of sleeve-links, in case I should be asked, when the Emperor called me

and said that von Dresler should receive the "Universal Distinction."[1] As the regulations say that it is to be awarded only to men of long service after twenty years' employment without complaint, I could not help showing my astonishment. The Emperor noticed this, and said very decidedly, "I have promised Baron von Sternburg, so let me have the 'Universal Distinction' as soon as we get back, that I may decorate him at once." As things were with us, even the Chancellor could not have prevented the bestowing of the "Universal Distinction" on this stripling of nineteen years. It was of course not an event of world-wide significance, but I sincerely regretted it in this case because it was so plainly characteristic. The Emperor permitted no one to do anything except to say, "At your service," or "As your Majesty commands," however injudicious his commands might be.

The ignominious part played by Herr von Podbielski[2] during his stay in Rominten occurs to me at this point. He was suspected of having ordered too liberal a slaughter of elks, and it had also been whispered to the Emperor that he was not always ready to place sufficient funds at the disposal of the Rominten Domain. After dinner the Emperor attacked him in front of the assembled guests, with such biting sarcasm, that he was driven into a corner. Finally, when the Emperor's tone became impressive and serious, there was no escape for him, he could only murmur: "As your Majesty commands." For a man such as a Prussian Minister is generally supposed to be, it was a very humiliating and pitiful position.

[1] An Order usually given for long service in a subordinate capacity.

[2] Victor von Podbielski, born 1844. Was at this date Minister of Agriculture.

On another occasion someone happened to remark on the insufficient funds which the Government in Gumbinnen and the Minister of Agriculture provided for the Domain of Rominten. His Majesty turned sharply to Herr Wesner, the head of the Forestry Department of the Province, who was close by. He immediately broke in: "Your Majesty, as long as I was Head Forester in Gumbinnen, I always succeeded in obtaining as much money from the Government as the Domain of Rominten asked for." This came out so naturally and with such complete assurance that I could not suppress the conviction that this gentleman had entirely ignored even the possibility of considering whether such personal wishes might do harm, how much money they might divert from much more important purposes, and finally whether he could comply with them without violence to his sense of duty.

Herr Wesner was hypnotised by these wishes from above. Every power of independent thought, every feeling of responsibility was paralysed. It is the wish of the All Highest, therefore it must be fulfilled. On the other hand, how worldly-wise his attitude was was subsequently proved, for in an incredibly short time he was appointed Chief of the Forestry Department of the Province. . . .

I was overcome with tragic apprehensions at the Imperial Manœuvres which took place at the beginning of September near Merseburg. What, I thought, will happen in real warfare when the Chief of the General Staff, Count Schlieffen, never expresses even an opinion, to say nothing of a conviction? Silently, seriously, and without moving a muscle of his face, he carries out the commands given him by the All Highest, and his stereotyped answer is: "As Your Majesty com-

mands." Unconsciously I am always driven to think of the famous "*archiprêt*" of Field-Marshal Lebœuf; having got into the way for many years of reporting that everything was "*archiprêt*," the Marshal automatically did the same on the day of crisis,[1] when it had such disastrous consequences for France. This "As Your Majesty commands" is, I feel, equally disastrous for us, or at any rate may become so any day.

During the Imperial Manœuvres one could not help noticing the depression of the sensible members of the General Staff and many of the senior officers. The situations on which important decisions were required never in the least resembled anything that could occur in war. It was all a question of a greater or less dependence on Imperial Headquarters. "You must not go too far." "You must stage-manage a fine show." "He prefers massed attacks." "The main battle must be here, because cavalry cannot attack anywhere else." This was practically all that was thought of, and what can one say of the Manœuvres themselves!

There was hardly ever any real cavalry-scouting. No one seemed to think of the part played by artillery. There was hardly ever any preparation for infantry attacks. Equally little account was taken of shooting. The commanders were in front of the firing-line. The columns were almost on their heels. Cavalry executed attacks which would have been quite impossible on the battlefield. In short it was a series of perfect lessons how not to do it: very seldom how it should be done. Think of the concentration of these masses of men and the cost of it! I felt depressed and humiliated when I found myself among the officers of the Foreign Powers. Such were the results of this everlasting "As

[1] Just before the war of 1870.

Your Majesty commands" in time of peace. What will happen in war time?

This unquestioning silence, and obedience to all commands, naturally leads to actual deception. At the cavalry drills at Alten-Grabow the first troop had an average of thirteen horses, that is to say, nine in the first and four in the second file, and five blank files, so that the number in each squadron[1] was fifty-two. When they were drawn up for a parade or to take part in parade-marches, this number was very cleverly and unobtrusively increased by men who had been held in reserve under cover in the neighbourhood. The Emperor, therefore, not unnaturally came to the conclusion that the same body of cavalry would be equal day after day to any task, however severe. As a matter of fact but few horses can stand such a strain. What really happens is that the men relieve each other in the way I have described.

It has in fact become the usual thing to fool the Emperor in this way at the annual field days of the Cavalry Division of the Guard at Döberitz: for instance, the official orders are that the regiment shall leave Berlin in the night between twelve and one o'clock, be on the field at Döberitz early in the morning, and, after a very exhausting day of Divisional Exercises under the personal direction of His Majesty, return to barracks at night. What actually happened —as this would have been too much for all concerned— was that the regiment generally left barracks a day sooner, was kept hidden in billets in the neighbourhood, and returned to barracks on the next day. Incidentally it had to pay the cost out of its own funds.

Why is it that no superior officer has ever explained

[1] A squadron is composed of four troops.

that this drill is too much for the men and the horses, and would have been almost impossible unless they had hit on this way of helping themselves?

These deceptions are not the only consequences of the existing regime, and are only a fraction of what one has to know if one would understand how it is that in the German Army "anything is possible," even to changes at the eleventh hour, so that we may well say that nothing is constant and likely except change.

The power of the superior officer has been immeasurably increased by the relentless system of dismissals in the Army, and the showers of distinctions of all sorts; and last, not least, the mad competition in every branch has become a source of temptation too strong for the moral fibre of many. The higher we go the worse this intriguing and servility naturally become, for it is at the top that one has most to fear and most to hope. Everybody in the immediate neighbourhood of the Emperor in time becomes, to all intents and purposes, his slave. Will he not one day have a rude awakening, if at a critical moment they show themselves to be slaves indeed?

It is the same with our diplomacy and administration, and it does not stop short with the official classes. The whole machinery of the State, of all independent administrative bodies, and the artistic life of the country suffer still more. The future historian will find here the best explanation of this degeneracy, which would otherwise remain a riddle.

Let me mention only two striking examples. One day one of the guides pointed out to some visitors who were going over the Cathedral that a certain beautiful mosaic had not been approved of by the Emperor. Somebody asked, quite naturally: "What are you going to do about it?" "We shall remove it and

make another." "What will that cost?" "About two thousand pounds, but that does not matter, because the chief thing is that the Kaiser shall like it."

This is an appropriate place for recalling the story of the pollution of the water-supply of Metz and the epidemic of typhoid. Acting on mere rumour the Emperor telegraphed a very severe reprimand, and ordered the immediate cutting off of the supply. It was later discovered that there was no pollution of the water, that there were no cases of typhoid, while on the other hand the stoppage of the supply had exposed the whole town to the gravest danger during a fire, which fortunately, however, turned out not to be serious.

Even the Empress often remained silent when she should have spoken her mind. It happened one day that in fixing the menu she had ordered a dish which the Emperor had particularly fancied, on two successive days. When the Emperor complained of this "monotony" she said nothing, and the kitchen staff had to bear the brunt of the Imperial displeasure.

On the whole, however, I feel bound to admit that, of all the members of the Court, the ladies of the Empress's circle are the only ones who not infrequently show the courage of their convictions. This is partly due to a certain fanatical devotion to truth, created by their strong religious leanings, and partly to a certain *naïveté*. I fancy they are often surprised that no one else dares to contradict. The truth is that the Emperor treats everybody connected with the entourage of the Empress very leniently. His one object is to have as few discussions with them as possible, and he almost always gives way. These concessions to the Empress's wishes are confined, however, to purely personal matters. He slips away as quickly as possible,

and is always in the best of tempers as soon as he has left, and always enjoys life most when free from the restraint of his family. Every time he returns home I notice how the atmosphere oppresses him. He is always anxious to get away, but his wife's one desire is to keep him in sight as much as possible.

More than once this has caused us quite considerable difficulties in making plans for his journeys. But then the Empress always has her way in the end, partly because of the strong sense of duty by which he is guided in everything connected with family life, partly because to a certain extent these ties are too strong even for his powerful personality. There is something really feminine and touching in the way she clings to him; but often I am inclined to think that it is not without its dangers, for the surest way for a woman to make a man dislike her is to run after him too openly.

But if, because of the Emperor's feelings for the Empress, her ladies have enjoyed the advantage of being able to express their opinions, sometimes in disagreement with His Majesty's, more freely than anyone else, it would be a mistake to conclude that they can by any possibility influence him. It is easy to understand that from time immemorial most rulers have been prone to look upon their strictly religious and conservative subjects as the strongest pillars of the throne, and there is no doubt that the Emperor is, to a certain extent, of this way of thinking. Yet, by the very exaggeration of their orthodoxy and ultra-reactionary ideas, the ladies sometimes drive him in the opposite direction. I have often noticed that the Emperor is peculiarly ready to give way to them, and allows them much freedom in saying what they think, but these opinions have the effect of irritating him. It may

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be either that he finds the narrow-mindedness of their views specially objectionable, or merely that he thinks anyone distasteful who does not feel just as he does; but in any case, whenever he has seemed to agree with them, the Emperor is apt, immediately afterwards, to swerve further than usual in the direction of liberal ideas.

On such occasions I often think to myself what a delusion it is to imagine that all would be well if only Ministers and high Office-bearers round the Emperor clung less desperately to their places, and were not afraid to risk losing them by speaking their mind openly. As I see the situation, this would only anger him beyond measure, and, given his temperament, would only make him take up a still more uncompromising attitude in word and deed.

It is not for nothing that he once said: "Here we have a man who does not recognise the King of Prussia as supreme in all things"; and at another time: "It is I who dismiss my Ministers, not they me." It is, I am convinced, Utopian to imagine that frank expression of opinion to the Emperor will ever be possible. It may truly be said to all who enter the inner circle:

"Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch' entrate."

I must add here that the occasional brutality of the Emperor's manner, and on the other hand, his practical jokes, which too often take the shape of boorish horse-play, test the power of self-command and the tact of all who serve him to the utmost. So greatly do they dread the reception with which they may meet should they approach him inopportunely, that at times it is difficult, even impossible, to induce them to say anything of importance to him.

CHAPTER IV

"AS YOUR MAJESTY COMMANDS"

VERY curious are the Kaiser's frequent arguments, or rather his lectures, on art, because, as elsewhere, there is no question here of any real discussion. The Emperor has an invincible prejudice against all modern tendencies. He not only expresses his uncompromising ideas very emphatically in conversation, but he makes it his business to translate them into practice, and to influence the world in their favour by what he says at prize givings or similar functions, and by what he does when he gives orders for purchases either for the State or for his private collections.

They are obvious too when he distributes decorations, or any other mark of personal favour. I am convinced that he is preparing many disappointments for himself. All art must be developed freely from within. Any attempt to influence it on the part of the great ones of the earth by rewards and punishments demoralises the artist, for they appeal only to the lower instincts. They result in servility, and fill the artist's mind with thoughts of personal advancement, rather than of giving the best that is in him in obedience to his inmost convictions.

Just before the unveiling of the Wagner Memorial in Berlin, the Emperor was particularly interested in such ideas, and apparently he was not too well pleased with the erection of a monument at all. One day in

Rominten he said: "Why do people really make such a fuss of this Wagner? The fellow was after all only a simple conductor, nothing more than a conductor—a quite common conductor."[1] I am convinced that this was not the Emperor's settled opinion about Wagner, but his impulsive temperament genuinely persuaded him that he thought so at that particular moment.

On the 4th November 1903 the Emperor met the Czar at the Castle of Wiesbaden, and the Grand Duke of Hesse, as well as Prince Henry of Prussia were also present. It seemed to me that this time the meeting, although it took place in Wiesbaden, and not in Berlin or Potsdam, was of more interest to Russia than to ourselves. The Czar was undoubtedly in a better and more friendly mood than usual, and his suite, which had previously, on similar occasions, given the impression of great reserve—to say no more—was this time friendly and amiable. The Russians, who had generally confined themselves to French, now took the trouble to talk German. It is a fairly general rule that one can judge the temper of a Russian by noticing whether he speaks German or French.

For the Russians, with all their difficulties in the Far East as well as in the Balkan Peninsula, it is a matter of no small importance to protect their rear. But I believe that unfortunately we are to provide the much-needed protection for the *beaux yeux du Czar* and nothing more. That is why we have suddenly abandoned our long-standing policy of friendliness to Turkey, and are rude to the Sultan, without obtaining any real advantage in return. But our arts of diplomacy are at the mercy of the whims of the moment, and are never logical or consistent. Can it be that in this

[1] *Kapellmeister*

business too Count Bülow held his tongue? I do not know, but it looks to me like it.

There was a great banquet for the Czar, followed by a performance of "Oberon." At the present moment the Theatre in Wiesbaden is the most beautiful I know. Not even the Opera-houses in Vienna or Paris equal its perfect proportions or its sober taste and intimate charm. The performance itself was in the matter of general arrangement, *i.e.*, scenery, costumes, and indeed all technical respects, the most perfect imaginable. I think, however, that we are now overrating technique and routine. This ensures us great successes with the general public, but we miss something of true art.

On the evening before the arrival of the Czar three short pieces were given at the Theatre, two of which were by the poet Lauff. The boastfulness, the pomposity and adulation, which are expressed in these pieces are almost unbelievable. Everybody seemed to feel this, and to be depressed accordingly, and among them some very eminent persons of the most varied vocations could not refrain from saying what they thought. Judge of my amazement when, as soon as His Majesty expressed his Imperial satisfaction with the plays, some of them could find no words of admiration and praise sufficiently enthusiastic. This unabashed *volte-face*, and above all their embarrassment, if anybody happened to be standing near them who had heard the exactly opposite opinion uttered a few minutes before, were more than a little amusing; but its effect on me was to produce a deep sense of melancholy. It was of course characteristic of our people and our conditions, but a serious sign of the times for anyone whose thoughts go below the surface. This servility of mind goes so far that there are men

who make a regular practice of saying nothing until they have first heard the Emperor's opinion, and then a little later serving it up to him as their own.

* * *

As I think it may be interesting to me in later years to know what I thought about the illness of the Emperor, I put down the following notes. He had a slight hoarseness on his return from his journey from the North in 1903, which caused his physicians some little concern. The hoarseness persisted even for some time after. In September, on the occasion of the Imperial Manœuvres in Merseburg (4th to 11th September), Dr Ilberg, the Chief of the Medical Staff, first discovered a polypus in his throat. Geheimrat Schmidt was immediately called into consultation. Both doctors declared unhesitatingly that the growth was not malignant, and it was suggested that it should be removed later in the autumn. The operation took place on the 7th November at ten o'clock in the morning at the New Palace. Examination confirmed the earlier diagnosis, *i.e.*, absolutely not malignant. The truth was then published, but the whole matter had been kept a complete secret till that moment.

* * * * * *

We have lately had considerable difficulties with the Crown Prince. Their Majesties had expected to meet him in the Garrison Church one Sunday; but instead the Emperor met him immediately after the service at breakfast in the regimental Casino, and instantly reprimanded him in no measured terms in the hearing of a good many other officers.

A few days later, the Emperor learnt that the Crown Prince had gone to the performance of Beyerlein's

"Zapfenstreich"[1] at the Lessing Theatre. Here, too, a scolding and a warning resulted, loud enough for all who happened to be present to hear. These two incidents, together with others of less importance, can only end, I feel, in strained relations between father and son. One cannot help being afraid that such interference with the personal liberty of a grown-up man, although his circumstances are not those of an ordinary mortal, can only have the worst consequences, and above all must make sincerity between the two impossible.

* * *

The dominating personality in the Controller's Department is its Chief, Count zu Eulenburg, the Chief Controller and High Steward. Immediately below him are the High Steward, Freiherr von Lyncker,[2] and myself as Controller of the Household. Count Eulenburg has undertaken the immediate supervision of all matters of general importance, as well as all questions of expenses and finance, and it is he who gives the Emperor the daily report. Up to now I have always regarded it as a piece of particular good fortune to be working under such a superior. The exceptional justice and rapidity of his judgment in the most varied situations have often astonished me. His great strength lies, however, not only in these qualities, but in the extraordinary self-restraint with which he limits himself to aiming only at what is humanly possible. His adroitness in managing the most delicate matters is ideal. *Suaviter in modo, fortiter in re.* He never seems to have any personal wishes. He shuns no labour, and is cast down by no disappointment.

I greatly respect the understanding and ability of

[1] Later performed in London under the title of "Lights Out."

[2] *Freiherr von Lyncker.* See note p. 27.

my colleague Herr von Lyncker, but he has not the same presence of mind, the same assurance in face of disturbing circumstances as Count Eulenburg. At the same time his earnest endeavour to probe even the smallest details to the very bottom, and his energetic, systematic, and practical way of dealing with them are worthy of all praise. The co-operation of these two has had splendid results. Herr von Lyncker, with his cooler, somewhat harder personality and his keenness for detail, is an ideal complement to Count Eulenburg with his adroitness and eminent gifts, which may almost be called genius.

As one or other of us three is in constant personal attendance on the Emperor, it follows that we are in constant touch with each other, and all three of us are bound to be fully informed about everything of any importance. This results in a very considerable amount, and a great variety, of interesting work.

The best way of making the nature of our duties clear is to describe a typical day during the Emperor's residence in the Palace in Berlin.

At about half-past nine Count Eulenburg gives his daily report to the Emperor. Immediately after this we all three meet. Before that we have matters of our own particular departments to settle, such as the consideration of all reports, petitions, offers, etc. We then confer about changes in organisation and any other minor incidents, and particularly the plans for the Emperor's journeys.

These plans occupy a great deal of time, as every detail has to be arranged months ahead. None the less, they are subject to perpetual changes, so that in the end, in spite of the most careful perparations, we have learnt to expect only the unexpected.

Very important too is the legal work. For this purpose Privy Councillor [1] Rath has an interview nearly every day, which lasts one to two hours. The general subjects of discussion are the purchase of land or houses, litigation, leases, road maintenance, legal questions of all kinds, charity, the administration of private property, grants of pensions, the investigation of particular incidents, etc.

We have a great deal of work too in connection with building questions. One Chief Architect and four Court Architects are busy all the year round, and we receive reports from each of them as required. In exceptional cases the Court Architect Ihne is often consulted. As much as £100,000 a year is spent on extraordinary building. Other things we have to consider are the purchases of sculptures, pictures, tapestries, and other works of art. A variety of every-day incidents of diplomatic and Court life are part of the day's work, and help to preserve us from undue monotony. For instance, Herr von Lyncker has under his charge as many as seventy-six palaces and castles.

Generally speaking, our work finishes between 4 and 5.30 in the afternoon. The Controller on duty has to be present at 8 o'clock in the evening for dinner in the Palace, and cannot leave his post before 11 o'clock, and often not till one or half-past one in the morning. In such cases the number of working hours may well be as high as fourteen or fifteen.

My principal duties are the following :—

First, I have independent control of the kitchens. To understand what this means I may mention that the staff consists of three head-cooks, twelve *chefs*, and three field cooks. Further, I am responsible for the cellars

[1] Geheimer Oberregierungsrat Rath.

and for the stock of wines, which vary in value between £60,000 and £100,000, and for all purchases. I am in charge of the plate, the pantries, the linen stores, and the laundries. The liveries are no small matter, for at great Court functions as many as six hundred men may have to be in gala costume. I keep all the accounts, and supervise the workmen, the fuel supply, the boats, and the staffs of sailors and boatmen. When there is a great function I have to arrange the programme of the ceremonies and the invitations, and other personal matters.

On each journey the whole responsibility is handed over to one particular Controller. In such cases scores of telegrams naturally stream in from the early morning to the middle of the night. On one afternoon, without any special reason, I received about thirty telegrams, all of which meant answers and special arrangements. In addition to this, plans are always being changed. The Emperor hates to be asked any questions, but at the same time he can be seriously annoyed if he has not been consulted about this or that.

More than three or four questions in succession he cannot endure; and even so, we have to watch most attentively for a favourable moment for putting them. So it happened that one day at Rominten, where the difficulties of making arrangements are greater than elsewhere, a round dozen of questions had accumulated, in regard to which it was absolutely indispensable to have the Emperor's instructions. The first was concerned with the wish of the Empress to meet His Majesty on his return journey. Three hours after I had received her telegram asking the question, came a second, inquiring why I had not answered the first. Then the Chancellor asked when he could have an

audience on important matters. Thirdly, the Minister of Agriculture had asked when he was to come to Rominten. Next, Count Eulenburg had several questions connected with the current affairs of the Controller's Department in Berlin; and last of all, definite arrangements had to be made for the expected visit of a princely personage.

I had compressed all these matters into very short questions, to save the Emperor all possible trouble, but none the less I had to have his decision. I had not succeeded during the whole of that afternoon in approaching him, and even in the evening after dinner I could not manage it. I think he must have noticed that I wanted to come to him with inquiries; anyhow, he arranged it so that I could not get near him. As soon as I noticed this, I pretended to have given up the idea, and waited the whole evening until the Emperor said good night.

Instantly I was at his side, and as I was walking with him to his bedroom, I got him to give me five answers. Then he stopped and said: "You have been bothering me the whole day, but now I refuse to have any more questions." I said: "As Your Majesty commands," just as I should have spoken to him twenty years earlier, when he was only my battalion commander. The Emperor went on and still I stuck quietly to his side and put three more questions, which he also answered. Then he stopped again and said: "I have already told you once that I don't want to be troubled with any more questions; leave me on the spot." I again answered: "As Your Majesty commands," but still walked with the Emperor, and asked him three more questions, and again received the necessary answers. Finally he got to his door and smiled, and the next moment banged the door in my face, so that that

evening at any rate my last question had to remain without a reply.

It is easy to see how nerve-racking the work was made by such personal relationships and by our far-reaching responsibilities, especially when we were on a journey.

22nd November 1903.[1]

The surgeons and physicians are quite definite in their opinion that the Emperor's illness is not malignant. Still I am made a little uneasy by the slow progress of the illness, and he still gets red in the face whenever he talks.

24th November 1903.

I heard from Herr von Rheinbaben,[2] the Minister of Finance, about his many characteristic worries in connection with the building of the palace in Posen. Last year he assumed, on the strength of the general plan, that he would be able to build the palace for £150,000. He made arrangements on this footing with the Committee of the House of Representatives, and contrary to expectations, this sum was granted without protest. In the meantime, however, the Emperor had decided on more brilliant projects. He has decided to build a *cour d'honneur* in which a coach and four can turn easily, and he wants suitable accommodation to be built for the Crown Prince, the Crown Princess, and the other Princes, and he insists on larger reception rooms. This means that the estimates must be increased to £240,000, which, with furnishing and so forth, involves £300,000. Thus

[1] At this point the Author's Diary proper begins.

[2] *Georg Freiherr von Rheinbaben*—1901-1910 Minister of Finance; 1910-1918 Governor of the Rhine Province. Died 1921.

the poor Minister of Finance is faced with the ordeal of having to go to the Committee, whom he assured last year that the building would in no case cost more than £150,000, with a demand for double that sum. He is horrified at the thought of the storm that this will raise and the attacks that he will have to endure in Parliament, but, on the other hand, he cannot make up his mind to do his plain duty. I am sure that the idea has never entered his head of saying straight out, "Your Majesty authorised me to ask for £150,000 last year, and in order to secure the grant, I pledged myself that this amount should not be exceeded. Now you order me to ask double. That I simply cannot do. If your Majesty's mind is absolutely made up, your Majesty must find another Minister to do it. You must decide whether to set more store by your Minister of Finance or your double estimate."

In the past some Minister bold enough might have been found, though to-day we can hardly conceive such a thing possible. They are frightened out of their wits; they shuffle from side to side and leave the rest to kind fate.

29th November 1903.

When I read through what I have written I cannot conceal from myself that it is bound to convey to an impartial reader the impression that I am more pessimistic than I really am.

It is certain that our system of government is not adapted to the times, and has many hidden weaknesses. It is a serious thing that many of our contemporaries feel that many wheels in the machinery of State will not work, while on the other hand we are powerless to make any far-reaching social and political changes.

The real reason of our social troubles is in my opinion that the culture of the lower classes and the mass of the people has progressed more rapidly than the upper classes expected. The system of government should therefore be modernised a little, and more account should be taken of the spirit of the times. Unfortunately, however, the reactionary forces are the ruling power.

Their continued mastery will be a grave danger, for our system is beset by peril both at home and abroad, and has practically degenerated into a régime very like the policies of the Royal Closet in the eighteenth century.

Nevertheless the political and industrial development of our country is so extraordinary, and all who have power and influence are so deeply concerned for the maintenance of favourable conditions, that they will probably remain strong enough to defeat any revolutionary or violent development either from above or below. But many changes in the direction of more modern ideas are inevitable. I hope we may succeed without too many conflicts and upheavals.

30th November 1903.

It is very remarkable how the Emperor's sympathy and predilection for mere externals and pageantry has become so pronounced during his illness. He is almost exclusively occupied just now with the decoration of the White Hall, the choice of the Ladies of the Palace for the Empress on the model of the Austrian and Italian Courts, and the new appointment of Heralds for all ceremonial occasions.

When we reflect how poor are the social conditions

of the day, how urgent are our needs, how essential it is for us to have a better understanding of the spirit of the time, a shiver of apprehension may well run through us when we see the digging out of so much rubbish from the lumber rooms where it has lain buried for two centuries.

It may be urged that these things are but superficial and external, and that the energy of the people will be strong enough to overcome these obstacles. Let us hope so. But such externals are far from being without danger, for they must end by affecting the mentality which devotes itself to them. Instead of seeing the world as it is to-day, such a mind readily lapses into fantastic trifling; and instead of fixing its eyes on the future, it is too fond of looking backward.

In spite of these anxieties, however, I am not one of the prophets of evil. At the moment, there is insecurity both at home and abroad, but we are far from being, as is so often said in our immediate circle,[1] on the verge of revolution. This could only come if we ourselves and the upper classes, because of our alienation from the life of the people and the trend of modern ideas, should fail to understand them and allow ourselves to be driven back into reactionary courses. This might easily hasten a catastrophe.

There is a great deal in our circumstances, both in the upper classes and the lower, which reminds one of periods of the greatest political upheaval; but even if this be so, neither men nor affairs are the same as they were then. They can only become so through mistaken policy. There is so much that is sound and healthy in the general development of our people: it is based on such exemplary qualities; they strive after such high

[1] By this I probably meant the *entourage* of the Emperor.—*Author's Note.*

ideals, that I still dare to hope we may amend many of our errors and brave many a storm. Only let us not forget that we must look forward and not backward too much.

22nd December 1903.

After the hunt in Göhrde, the centenary of the foundation of the Uhlans, the 73rd (Prince Albrecht), and the Scharnhorst Artillery Regiments was celebrated on the 19th and 20th of this month. As a matter of fact, however, these three regiments have no connection whatever with the troops of the Hanoverian Army, their descent from which has been declared to be clearly established by an order of the Imperial Cabinet.

Nevertheless most people seem to have grown quite familiar with the idea of such a pedigree, and used the opportunity for joining in any of the festivities which came in their way. The speech which the Emperor made at the Tivoli in the presence of 730 officers on the active list, as well as of former Prussian and Hanoverian officers, was the first he has made in public since his illness. His voice sounded extremely well, and he was easily heard in the farthest corners of the room. There was no mistaking the enthusiasm of his hearers. In spite of all these efforts, however, the adherents of the Guelphs have grown stronger in recent years, and their power is growing. We should not, however, attach too much importance to momentary successes. . . .

There was a dinner in the Royal Palace to former Prussian and Hanoverian officers, and the Emperor was particularly gracious to them. I could not help thinking of the terms in which he had spoken of the many retired officers who were living in Naumburg.

"The old donkeys of Naumburg" was what he called them.

In his speech that evening I was particularly struck by the passage, "We must never forget that the German legions and the German troops of Blücher on the day of Waterloo saved the British Army and the Duke of Wellington from annihilation." I said to several of my friends that I was convinced that the mention of this at the present moment could not have a good effect on our relations with England. But it surprised me to find how everybody, even sensible people in high positions, were delighted to hear this statement, which they took as a "proof" of the story. How dangerous it is to allow oneself to be led astray by feelings of passion in questions of high policy. Only calm, dispassionate intelligence, without any bias or sentiment, can inspire wise action.

The change of the title "Lady of the Palace"[1] into "Lady-in-Waiting,"[2] and the impending appointment of new Ladies of the Palace, ranking above them, has seriously wounded the feelings of these ladies. Countess Brockdorff is the only one who has risen superior to the situation. The other ladies are too much at the mercy of their injured pride; they lose themselves in details and contradictions, and attach far too much importance to the whole affair.

After all it is too late to mend matters, and it can do no good to pay too much regard to their personal feelings and their own position. The really decisive reasons for the change are to be found after all in pure considerations of general convenience. Once when Countess Keller was grumbling to the Emperor about it, he replied that the title of "Hofstaatsdame"

[1] Palastdame. [2] Hofstaatsdame.

was the traditional Prussian title. When, in spite of this "benevolent and gracious, as well as detailed, explanation," the Countess still went on lamenting, the Emperor finally said, "Well, at any rate you can trace the historical development of your position back to Countess Voss."[1]

[1] *Countess Voss* was "*Oberhofmeisterin*" (Chief Lady-in-Waiting) at the Courts of Frederick William II. and III. up to the time of Queen Louise. She published Memoirs and had great influence on politics.

CHAPTER V

THE MAKING OF AN AUTOCRAT

3rd January 1904.

YESTERDAY evening, after a dinner to the Generals in command of Military Districts, a party adjourned to the Equerries' Room. The Emperor had invited about twelve gentlemen to stay. The company was small and carefully chosen, and a very interesting conversation ensued. The first subject discussed was the political position in the Far East, and more particularly the question whether there would be a war between Russia and Japan or not. There was such great diversity of opinion that an impartial listener could come to no conclusion one way or the other.

After that the conversation turned on domestic politics. The chief subjects were the ill-treatment of soldiers and the proceedings which had followed, the attacks on the Army in the Reichstag, and the pamphlets of Bilse and Beyerlein. It was a tragedy to my mind to hear the opinions expressed by the highest authorities of the Army. I was particularly impressed by the fact that not one of those present dared to speak dispassionately, objectively, and from expert knowledge, about the causes of so many obvious abuses.

There was no suggestion of attacking the evil at its roots, or the possibility of any reform in our Army system or in the selection of officers. Certainly none of those

present ventured to hint, even distantly, at any such thing; but how easy it would have been to speak of the ever-growing demands made on our soldiers, or to point out that everyone, apparently forgetting the urgent need of sweeping aside much that is unessential, perhaps even dangerous, seemed rather bent on developing our antiquated barrack-yard drill more and more. Nobody dared to speak of the terrible competition which it looks as if the higher powers are anxious to foster in the Army by rewards, decorations, and promotions, and, on the other hand, by punishments and ruthless dismissals. Still less did anyone dare to suggest that the level of education in our people had risen, and that in the natural order of things it would be necessary to adopt a different way of dealing with an entirely different type of soldier. Finally, it was never even mentioned that the officers, by their exclusiveness and their one-sided views of life, have not only failed to keep pace with the moral progress of the nation, but that the risk of complete estrangement is growing day by day. Not a syllable was spoken about the many other abuses which are said to prevail in the Army. It all left on me a feeling of profoundest depression and melancholy. Instead of discussing the essentials, they wasted words on insignificant incidents.

A dozen politicians all talking at once, and with the punch circulating freely, are apt to be irresponsible; and it is no wonder if at such a moment strange ideas should suggest themselves to the lively imagination of the Emperor. I say irresponsible, because who can later be made answerable for opinions or ideas expressed in the midst of such a babel? It was, for instance, on such an evening that the Emperor said: "When we can't have the Law with us, we will get on without it."

Although many of those who take part in such "punch-parliaments" are at the moment the least likely to realise the far-reaching effects of their talk, nevertheless some of the party struck me as a little uneasy. The worst of all seemed to me the Minister of War. His settled conviction is that, with the Electoral Laws as they stand, the Crown is powerless, and the first duty of the Government—he has said it again and again—and the only thing that can save the country, is to change them. From his narrow-minded point of view that is not so unintelligent; it means that he can declare himself powerless till his wishes are fulfilled, and so shift the responsibility for every delay in reform and improvement in the Army on to other shoulders. On the other hand, any such change in the law is no concern of his, and he is not answerable for it. I can only say that few things have ever made me so despondent.

I am certain, too, that not one of those who were present, if they had had to make private and responsible reports on these subjects, would have been content to deal with such matters so superficially. But here the vices of our system were thrown into the strongest relief. How much mischief it might do! How worthless are the monarch's chosen advisers! There can be no lack of men who think a good deal more deeply for themselves, but that will not help us if, after all, they never dare speak their minds frankly. That is the fault from which all others spring, to which we must always return, and which is so full of menace for the future of Germany.

21st February 1904.

Again and again one cannot help wondering at the remarkable closeness with which the Emperor watches

every modern tendency and all progress. To-day it is radium; to-morrow it will be the excavations in Babylon; and perhaps the next day he will discourse on free and unprejudiced scientific research. The development of machinery is a very favourite subject. He is following very closely the transition from the cylinder engine to the turbine and the motor. While he keeps in touch with all progress in these fields, he does not neglect literature. He is full of curiosity about the practical applications of science, and is always eager, whenever possible, to invite any man who has any useful invention to his credit to come and explain it to him.

22nd February 1904.

In contrast to this is the Emperor's aversion to modern literature and to modern art as a whole. In these fields his sympathies are with classical antiquity and historical tradition, and are so marked that in the course of time he has come to feel himself in sharp opposition to the art of this day, and its aims. This has caused much bad blood, and there are artists who think that such an attempt to dictate to the future must be the end of all art. To his sympathy for historical tradition can be traced his love of the study of the manners—and especially the dress—of the past, which often leads him to lay too much stress on mere pageantry. In the end it has produced a tendency to devote much attention to the uniforms, titles, and orders, in fact to every external detail, of the present day. One of the results of this is that, since nobody ever dares to oppose a whim of the Emperor, there are many who are only too ready to meet him more than halfway. This produces the many changes, changes

and still more changes, which not only astonish but distress many of the best men of to-day. (At the present moment, for instance, we are making the thirty-seventh alteration in the uniforms of the Army since the accession.)

As a general rule, it is a sign of a small mind and a petty age to attach such overwhelming importance to trifling external details. I am inclined to think that this predilection for mere show, and the rescue of so much from the lumber-room of history, to which it was not banished in the past without good reason, will do harm. But fortunately these peculiarities are counteracted by certain fine qualities, which must weaken, if not destroy, their dangerous influence.

First of all, the life of the Emperor is not one of mere amateurish trifling with these superfluities. They are on the whole nothing more than accessories, and the life of the Emperor is, it must be admitted, packed full with untiring zeal for the fulfilment of every duty which contemporary conditions impose on so powerful a ruler. In spite of all his reverence for tradition and history, he often breaks through the barriers which Court life and etiquette have raised in the past. Whenever he hears of a man of real importance, he rises superior to all prejudice and asks him to Court without any regard to his birth or rank.

What is of importance for the future and for history is the absolutist position which the Emperor has created for himself even in regard to persons such as these. However far removed from his sphere they may be, the sheer strength of his personality, combined with his position, makes it easy for him to break their spirit. However independent they may be, in his presence they learn servility—a servility even worse than that

of those whose whole lives have been spent at Court. Whenever they fear to cause real displeasure they are as little anxious to defend their opinions as anybody else. They only increase the horde of those who echo his every word. As for the Emperor himself, it is a thousand pities that even now, when the whole world is at peace, no men can be found who will honestly defend their own convictions. How much worse would be his state in hours of danger and difficulty? In these facts the historian will find a clue to much which would otherwise be unintelligible.

The Emperor can hardly ever see things and men as they really are. To one in his exalted position—and this was already the case before his accession—he is on a level so far above that of all the rest of his world that simple and clear ideas are impossible. It may be possible to take an astonishingly correct bird's-eye view of the whole machinery of the State and everything that is more or less external, but no one can get a real insight into the inner structure, the real organic life, the real driving force of things, from mere reports, however eminent their authors, nor from the most cleverly written descriptions in books. The mind can absorb such knowledge only through independent observation and experience.

We can only understand the Kotze affair,[1] for instance, which at the time made so much noise, if we realise that a temperament so impulsive was bound to be led into fatal errors by decisions made without knowledge or understanding of men and affairs. Even the extra-

[1] *Kotze.* A number of scandalous anonymous letters received by members of the highest society in Berlin were traced to Kammerherr (Chamberlain) von Kotze. They led to more than one duel and several libel actions.

ordinary gifts of the Emperor did not suffice to save him from himself, or to suggest a reasonable solution of the difficulties.

We can trace to the same cause the orders issued with regard to the private incomes of officers, which every young lieutenant must know to be quite inappropriate to the facts and impracticable.[1] The Emperor is wholly ignorant of the everyday conditions of life in the Army, and no adviser has dared to breathe a word of criticism against these orders, which, as everyone knows, simply cannot be carried out, and which make him look ridiculous.

23rd February 1904.

After one of the last Court Balls the Emperor sat with us at the *souper en tout petit comité* which is usual on such occasions. Old Lieutenant-General von Egloffstein, my immediate predecessor as Controller, who had been obliged to resign because his nerves could not stand the strain of the life, was the special target of his wit. As he was always saying that his drink was too cold, it was warmed for him. Then the Emperor stirred it with his finger and himself took a sip, and said, as he gave it back to him : " Now the temperature is right."

Innocent as this little incident is, it shows how simple, natural, and friendly the Emperor can be to his immediate friends, also how he loves to have the last word even in the smallest details, and how fully convinced he is that it is altogether a special mark of favour to be allowed to drink after him, and after he had put his fingers into the glass. As a matter of fact, the General actually took it as such, with the greatest

[1] See p. 221 below.

humility. I could not help wondering to what length the Emperor might not have gone. Whatever he had done, Egloffstein would have considered that it was a supreme condescension on His Majesty's part.

25th February 1904.

Up to the very moment of receiving the news of the actual outbreak of hostilities between Russia and Japan opinions as to the probability of such a war had been diametrically opposed, even in the best-informed circles. There was the same divergence of opinion as to the probable issue of the war. For example, Prince Henry expressed a certain anxiety for Russia, whereas one of the highest officers in the Navy, who had spent a great deal of time in the Far East, said he could not understand how the Japanese dared to measure swords with the Russians. "It is morally certain," he declared, "that they will be beaten to their knees, and their political existence imperilled."

At the Court Ball on the 8th of February General von Hanneken, who held the Chinese title of General, and was well known through the Chino-Japanese War, was among the guests. I reported his presence, and suggested that His Majesty might be interested to hear what he had to say. I was then ordered to inform the General that the Emperor wished to speak to him. I used this opportunity of conversing with him as to the probable result of the Russo-Japanese War. General von Hanneken told me that it was one of the greatest impertinences in the history of the world for Japan to venture to attack Russia. "Admitted that Japan has made great progress, which I certainly do not underestimate," he said, "I still know the conditions of both

sides too well not to be certain that the Japanese enterprise is lunacy, and that they have no chance of success."

At that very moment was taking place the first naval battle of Port Arthur, in which the Japanese Navy gave brilliant proof of its superiority.

27th February 1904.

There is at the present moment great pessimism among those who know our political conditions best, and among other clear-thinking and far-sighted observers. As I have often said, I myself am not blind to the vices of our system of government and the weaknesses of our State machine. I do not even hesitate to state my conviction that no government with a police so powerful and ubiquitous in its interference, with a bureaucracy so far-reaching, and militarism unlimited, can in the long run continue to exist. No one can yet foresee whether there is really a possibility of evolution eradicating these defects and so preventing a revolution. The development and rapid progress of the masses make it imperative that the upper classes should advance at least as fast and as far.

In fact, they have, by comparison, remained far behind. As a general rule they have not the least understanding of the changes which have taken place, and tremble for their class interests. If their power and influence remain strong enough to arrest or force back the development of the people, the result can only be a series of violent struggles, of which no one can foresee the issue. In our foreign relations we are afloat on a treacherous lake whose smooth surface may at any moment be lashed into mountainous waves.

But on the other hand, while I regard as quite possible the complications and even catastrophes in the affairs of the Empire, both at home and abroad, which the prophets of evil so confidently foretell, I still think them improbable.

First of all, such prophets seem to forget that "a tree cannot grow into heaven"; secondly, they underrate the troubles of other countries, which we can see if we probe deep enough, though they are not so near the surface as our own. Next, the most essential factor of the situation is that, up to the present, German trade and industry are, generally speaking, still sound and healthy. In spite of some things which justify pessimism, no one can deny that our national wealth is rapidly growing; that emigration is decreasing; and, in proportion to the population, illegitimate births and crime have diminished. This is particularly noticeable in the years from 1895 to 1904, during which the number of immigrants has positively exceeded that of emigrants. It is after all economic factors which in the long run make or mar not only the prosperity but the moral development of a people. Taken as a whole, the very definite progress of Germany from the economic point of view cannot be denied. Yet many eyes are directed with anxiety to the person of the Emperor, and they see imminent danger in his absolutism.

No one can be blind to this peril, and it will always be with us in a greater or less degree. All the same, the Government and even the Emperor himself are influenced in all important decisions by public opinion, the press, public meetings, and Parliament far more than they themselves know. They act as a safety valve, and thus there need be no immediate fear of

any disastrous explosion. Self-glorification, arbitrariness, and caprice may not be without their effect, but in the most essential and important decisions they are still, as a rule, not the decisive elements.

The greatest threat to the position of the Emperor is his constant habit of forcing his personality into the foreground. This is particularly the case in every department of our colonial policy, of which the Chinese and Venezuelan adventures are proofs. The day may come in which the blame for everything will be placed on the shoulders of a monarch who thus always asserts his personality; and this may well be a source of the gravest danger to the Crown.

Fortunately, the decisions which the Emperor makes on the impulse of the moment are dangerous only at the beginning. As time goes on, discretion gradually prevails, and he is not entirely unmoved by criticism—provided it is cautious and tactful. I have always had the inner conviction that he has not the particular kind of obstinacy which has often been so fatal to absolute rulers, as, for instance, Charles I. of England.

On the contrary, I have often thought that, when his impulsive temperament has once been directed into quieter courses, he has the saving grace of not being anxious to run his head against a brick wall. Thus, when I consider the whole situation, I again and again come to the conclusion that, in spite of the many dangers due to the personality of the Emperor, hopeful optimism is more justified than pessimism. The Emperor has extraordinary gifts and powers of quick and just judgment. His self-denial is remarkable; no breath of scandal can touch his private life. He never fails in his determined efforts to do justice to every claim that his great position makes on him. But it is just here that

the greatest danger lies. His immensely strong personality is piling up a weight of power for the Crown which must in the long run be fatal to any possible successors. If history teaches us anything, it is the danger of assuming that the founder of a personal autocracy will be followed by others as richly endowed as himself, or that they will use their power for the good of the State.

* * *

The Emperor's passion for travelling, and always having something to do, is growing. Now and again this adds not inconsiderable difficulties to the normal course of business. In the case of important decisions it often means serious delay. On the other hand, I find it from the political point of view rather an advantage that the Emperor should have some distractions which make him less inclined to interfere too autocratically, energetically, and impulsively.

This passion for travel, or to be doing something, is due, as a rule, to the dissatisfaction that the Emperor feels in the narrow circle of his home. The many restraints which the presence of the Empress and her *entourage* imposes on him make him uncomfortable. Their religious bigotry and narrow-minded ultra-conservatism are quite distasteful to a man like him, whose instincts and ideas are after all thoroughly modern and broad-minded. He often feels himself hampered and oppressed at home, and almost unconsciously tries to escape as often as possible. This feeling also seems to me to explain why he so frequently gives way to the Empress, even when her wishes are unimportant. It is concession for the sake of peace, and to avoid being worried over trivialities. This mood, which often

makes the atmosphere of the New Palace and the Castle somewhat oppressive, changes vastly for the better the moment there is any plan on foot, especially when a journey is in view, or when stimulating conversation with men offers him a prospect of change. . . .

It is very regrettable that the Emperor should so often adopt a manner to others which is bound to make much bad blood, and even to arouse widespread hostility. Though he means no harm, he often seems offensive and harsh. Thus the other day he pulled the Adjutant of the Crown Prince, a middle-aged Major, very energetically by the ear and gave him quite a severe blow on the neck, saying: "I am seriously displeased that the Crown Prince has appeared in public as an acrobat. He is much too good for that; you must stop that sort of thing." The Crown Prince had ridden one of his horses in a steeplechase on the day before and had won.

One day he was going to Kummersdorf for target practice. At Tempelhof he greeted the Minister of War and the Chief of the Military Cabinet, who joined him in his saloon, with these words: "You old donkeys believe that you know better because you are older than I am; but that is all nonsense. The orders that I wanted to give some time ago in the South-West African business were the only right ones, but you donkeys knew better, and now we all have to suffer from your stupidity." *Difficile est satiram non scribere.*

His habit of beckoning men to him with a threatening forefinger rather reminds one of the way in which puppies are taught and trained. He uses this gesture, moreover, not only to men, but to ladies, and I have noticed that they hardly like it. He did so even to the Princess Fürstenberg at Donaueschingen, and to

Princess Leiningen in the Stattholder's Palace in Strassburg, when he wanted to take them into dinner. One day he did the same thing at manœuvres to the Count of Turin, who was on horseback, and had to dismount and hurry over to the Emperor. He once gave the Grand Duke Vladimir a resounding blow with his Field-Marshal's baton, but that of course was a joke. No one could help noticing that this kind of *nonchalance* was far from pleasant to these royal and imperial personages, and I cannot help fearing that the Emperor has seriously displeased not a few crowned heads by such horseplay, which they can hardly be expected to find to their taste. These little traits are undoubtedly characteristic of the Emperor's whole attitude to men and the world, but I wish there were a way of making it clear to him that they cause quite unnecessary embarrassment, bitterness, and hatred.

1*st June* 1904.

Last Sunday evening the Emperor talked to me for about an hour on the terrace of the New Palace of his views about flags and standards. When he came to the throne, he said, he found incredibly little interest, and even unpardonable slackness, in these matters. "In the time of the Emperor William the Great, of thrice blessed memory," he went on, "the Colours for the new regiments used to be dedicated in his august presence. But they were most inartistic. They were made of cheap materials and painted in oil." He himself thought this disgraceful; and after a short time these Colours had been in quite an impossible condition. He had made most energetic representations on the matter to the Ministry of War. The first thing was to revive the

taste for artistic embroidery which had been usual in the past, especially in the time of the Great King. In the course of years he had been wonderfully successful, and he said that the Standard embroidered in silver that he was going to present to the Regiment of the Body Guard was a good example. At the same time he suggested that it would be of great benefit to a number of officers' wives, who would be paid for the work.

How Colours and Standards had been neglected had been shown by the fact that the Standard of the Hussars of the Guards had one day fallen to pieces, but they proposed to go on using it all the same. The Infantry Instruction Battalion had received a Colour on its formation. Now it had not a single shred of cloth left on it, though the battalion had never been under fire.

In Westphalia he had once on the occasion of an Imperial Parade discovered a regimental Colour with an impossibly large spike. None of the officers had ever noticed it, but they were suddenly filled with horror at this wonderful spike. He ordered an inquiry into the matter, and it was found that at manœuvres the man who carried the flag had broken the spike and simply had a longer one put on to suit his own taste without saying a word to anybody. But worst of all, at the time when he was in command of the Second Brigade of Infantry, the Kaiser noticed one day that the Colour's cover looked as if it were empty, and it was then discovered that the ensign, on his own authority, and without telling any of his officers about it, had taken the flag away and left it at home ! He had now, he added, put an end to such unpardonable slackness.

The Emperor said that the chief use of Colours is to impress the imagination of the rank and file. " How,"

he said to me, "can a man have any particular idea when he swears allegiance to a simple piece of wood?"

I think the Emperor overrates this effect. The majority of people are simple and unsophisticated, and in the long run not affected by symbols. The Prussian soldier has often enough proved with his blood that he can keep his oath to a flag-staff without a flag on it, as well as to the flag itself. The small importance which is attached to flags after three glorious campaigns at a time when the Army is doing its duty with such indefatigable zeal shows that it never enters the heads of practical and experienced officers who have known active service to set such store by mere externals. The professional soldier rather inclines to the opinion that in case of war the Colours are really useless baggage, best left behind when a battle begins, as the men who must be spared to guard them would be more useful in the firing-line. At Mars la Tour the 1st Dragoons of the Guards left a whole squadron behind to guard the Standard at a moment when every fighting man was of importance.

Not long ago the painter Röchling made several sketches at His Majesty's order showing the Great King [1] at Zorndorf with a flag in his hand. The picture will one day be a very noble and elegant tribute to that King's lofty ideals, but hardly to the value of the flag in battle. History tells us that the Great King seized the flag only when his infantry had retreated after several attacks, and led them against the enemy. But even this failed and the battalion streamed back again. Although Field-Marshal Count Schwerin had fallen at Prague at the head of his men with his Standard in his

[1] *i.e.*, Frederick the Great.

hand, this heroic action had, as everybody knows, no influence on the result of the battle.

* * *

It is characteristic that during the whole course of the Russo-Japanese War the foremost diplomatists, statesmen, and soldiers held diametrically opposed opinions about the chances of the final result. The pessimistic forecasts which the Emperor has so often made as to the final outcome both at home and abroad for Russia have now been confirmed. I am inclined to the opinion that, while no one can tell what misfortunes this war has stored up for Russia, her natural strength is a convincing argument against extreme pessimism.

Yesterday, together with the Equerries, Count Hohenau, Count Lambsdorf, and General Plessen, I was with the Emperor when he went from Wildpark to Berlin to receive the Duke of Anhalt. The Emperor explained to us that the object of his policy in Asia had been from the beginning to drive Russia into her present situation. It had, he said, been an absolute necessity for ensuring the relief of our Eastern frontier from Russian pressure, and when we had taken possession of Kiao-Chow he had foreseen exactly what had actually happened to Russia.

If that were his aim, it is impossible to reconcile it with his continual references to the "Yellow Peril"—a danger which he has done much to evoke by this very step. A further proof that this is his fear, is to be found in his picture which he calls "Peoples of Europe, guard your most sacred possessions," to which he frequently refers as showing that he had long since foreseen this menace.

On the other hand, I am astonished that he always speaks with satisfaction, and never with anxiety, of our seizure of Kiao-Chow. If his pessimistic forecasts with regard to Russia are justified by the event, and if the Yellow Races really grow as powerful as he fears, we cannot assume that they will allow us to remain in peaceful possession of this colony. But what would be the issue of a struggle with such strong enemies in the Far East remains a riddle.

It is to be hoped that the Russians will never discover anything of all this. They will always remain neighbours, with whom we have to reckon. The Emperor is occasionally misled by his temperament to talk about dangerous subjects even before strangers.

18*th June* 1904.

The Gordon-Bennett Races have again been ideally successful. There was no single accident during the races themselves which might have spoiled the harmony of the meeting during the stay of their Majesties. The narrow victory of the French competitor Théry over the next two German cars could only gratify German industry without hurting the feelings of any foreigners. It gives us a new chance of showing friendliness to the French.

Generally speaking, it is simply extraordinary how consistently the Emperor has been favoured by fortune during his reign. Take the case of Russia and compare the personalities of the two rulers. The Czar Nicholas II. also had ancestors of kingly appearance and imposing stature, and yet how ungraceful and insignificant he looks by the side of our Emperor. How brilliant, stimulating, and impressive the latter is in his conversa-

tion; how empty, flabby, and insignificant is the Czar! What a tragedy for him to have only daughters and no son and heir; how fortunate for our Emperor to have so many handsome, and mentally and physically well-developed sons.

And think of the two Empires: in Germany we have seen magnificent industrial development during the last fifteen years. Many of the Emperor's wishes could never have been fulfilled had not streams of gold, such as were never dreamed of a short time ago, flowed into the Exchequer. On the other hand, in Russia financial confusion has been growing from year to year; agriculture, commerce, and industry are decaying; famine is raging in enormous districts, and everywhere we see corruption and serious internal turmoil and revolts. With what incredible good fortune Germany extricated itself from the confusion in the Far East, and how deeply has Russia compromised itself for ages to come. Let us hope that the Emperor's good fortune will endure, but I cannot get the tag, "Call no one happy till he dies," out of my mind.

I am sometimes disturbed by the success of those who admire everything that has happened, or is happening to us. The supreme ruler has so accustomed himself to good fortune that he needs must hear that everything is going well, and cannot hear it often enough. Flatterers find a fruitful soil. "Our Emperor alone," their refrain runs, "has done everything well—not only well, but better than it could have been done by anyone else."

The administration of Kadinen[1] offers them a good opportunity. Although large subsidies are given every year for the maintenance of this property, no profits

[1] The Imperial pottery works.

are ever earned. Men like Landrat von E. like to appear as great experts; by taking advantage of special occasions and influence from above they succeed in receiving an order. They do not shrink from outbidding competitors who are naturally bound to look to profits. Then they appear, puffed up with pride, before the Emperor with the words: "This is the magnificent system of administration at Kadinen which has made it possible to obtain this or that contract." It never occurs to them to mention that this order was obtained only with the help of their connection with the Emperor, and by special pressure exercised on many who are only too anxious to gain credit in the highest quarters. Above all, they never mention that the goods have been sold below cost price.

In spite of all the subsidies which Kadinen annually swallows up, they still cut a fine figure, and can curry favour by exploiting isolated successes to the best advantage.

This habit of booming oneself, this indirect flattery, these suggestions that there could be nothing unsuccessful under the Emperor's reign, is carried to the verge of dishonesty. Thus the Emperor one day was absolutely delighted when he received a report that he had a cow in Kadinen which yielded forty litres of milk a day, but it must be clear to anybody who knows anything about agriculture that such a thing is a sheer abuse. This 40-litre cow is a characteristic sign of the times.[1]

[1] It is quite true that the yield of milk of the cows in Kadinen was exceptional. One explanation is that expense was no object in the buying of specially good milch cows, and all the influence which an Imperial administration can command was brought into play. Similarly, the cows were fed regardless of cost; occasionally they went so far, in case of need, as to pour into a cow more milk than was taken out of

Occasionally an incident in conversation shows how fatal a certain type of influence can be at Court. At dinner lately the conversation turned on crimes which had been recently committed, and this led to a discussion on the increase of brutality in Germany. Some mischief-makers naturally seized the opportunity to express their views, and with his usual impulsiveness the Emperor went yet a step further in a disquisition on the difficulties of governing so savage a people. "Yes," he said; "we shall not be able to get on in the next few years without a proper blood-letting and a few whiffs of powder." While he was saying this, the servants were in the room and heard every word.

I am perfectly convinced that the Emperor has far too keen and deeply rooted a political instinct to believe that the shooting of a few hundred men could settle political discontents, which, after all, cannot be considered serious until millions are affected. The only consequence of such talk, if it comes to be known, or even of such actions, would be to aggravate the discontent and hasten its spread. I need hardly say that I consider it one of the first duties of a Government to preserve order; if it cannot succeed by any other means it must not shrink from bloodshed, but there is a marked difference between the two ideas.

Similar, or even more reckless and irresponsible, speeches are not unusual in the mouths of the governing classes, and experience shows that they occasionally fall on dangerous ground. Something of the kind must have happened when unscrupulous advisers succeeded

her. The late lamented Potemkin could have learned a good deal in Kadinen. The Empress was not deceived; she saw through a great many of these tricks and fairy tales. As I know well, she was seriously distressed, but it was characteristic that she was powerless to get any changes made.—*Author's Note.*

in egging on the Emperor during the strike of the tramway employees in 1900 (which led to the riot in the Dönhoffsplatz),[1] and induced him to send the following telegram to the Commander-in-Chief of the *Gardes du Corps*: "I expect, when the troops intervene, to hear of at least five hundred people being shot down." One can only hope that in the course of time such remarks will become rarer and will not reach the public ear.

When I read these lines it alarms me to think that they may fall into the wrong hands. I cannot conceal from myself that this would be unfortunate just now. But on the other hand, the writing of these memoranda, which are to a certain extent a dialogue with myself, affords me a relief, which surely no one will grudge me, from many sombre thoughts. I also have a legitimate desire to be able to look back in the quiet days of advancing age on an interesting and agitated past.

21st June 1904.

The Mirbach affair[2] is far from pleasant. It shows once more what a danger religious fanaticism may be, even at the present day. The end has often justified the means. When money was being collected for the building of churches the desirability of subscribers was not closely considered. Titles, admission to Court, and patents of nobility and orders were scattered broadcast for money. This chapter in our history will not redound to our credit; it cannot fail to suggest malicious reflections on the destination of the money, and the

[1] The strike in question caused great excitement, because it was the first of its kind organised by Socialists in Germany; but the riots themselves were not serious.

[2] Count Mirbach administered the monies collected for the building of churches and charitable purposes on behalf of the Empress. A great scandal was caused when serious defalcations were discovered.

market value of all titles. Now all this trouble has been created by sheer thoughtlessness, for I am firmly convinced that there was nothing questionable in the way the money was spent, and that, as a general rule, titles were only given where it could be done with a clear conscience. Unfortunately Herr von Mirbach seems to have known full well that he would have the sanction of the two All Highest personages, and so to have overstepped all legitimate bounds. It is always particularly difficult for princely persons to recognise the boundaries of the moral law, as in their lives they always stand outside it.

20th July 1904.

Unfortunately nothing has been done yet in the Mirbach affair. In my opinion the public conscience demands a strict account of such considerable sums of money. In the course of the last fifteen years the total must have reached about £600,000. A frank declaration should be made that the raising of the money by trading in titles and orders will not be tolerated, even for the best possible object, such as the building of churches and charity. A pledge should be given that such things shall henceforth be made impossible in any circumstances. The public conscience has been so seriously roused that I am convinced it will not be satisfied with less. Yet nothing has been done, and the Ministry has only given a feeble explanation. The Government said it would be prepared in the autumn to answer the Mirbach interpellation. This is the way to open the door to the wildest rumours and calumnies, and nothing more unwise and impolitic can be imagined. The situation unfortunately is that Herr Mirbach still enjoys the support of their Majesties, and none dares to

point out what incalculable moral harm is being done to the monarchical principle and the authority of our Government by procrastination and all these attempts to hide the truth.

At a time like this it becomes continually clearer what a real danger it is that no one dares to say anything unpalatable, or at best trusts to chance for a favourable opportunity of speaking. An unpleasant feature of the whole situation is that irregularities are said to have occurred in the distribution of the funds, which for my own part, however, I consider quite impossible. Yet it is said that the guilty party was a subordinate Court official, who has been dismissed. Still more unpleasant is the report that a relative of Mirbach has spent a sum of about £2500 for other than charitable purposes. Further, I know that even long ago, for instance at the time of the Treber Trial[1] in Cassel, the contributions given by Director Schmidt were returned to him, and considerable sums were spent in other ways in order to avoid unpleasant revelations.

The facts are known only to very few, but I do not think that they can be kept secret much longer. If nothing is done, rumour will grow so wild, and calumny so bold, that everything will have to be cleared up sooner or later.

We seem to be drifting on aimlessly. It would create a much better effect and would be far more dignified to explain everything in good time and in the proper way.

21st July 1904.

The first Lord Chamberlain, Prince Solms, has lately submitted a memorandum in which he emphasises the

[1] The Treber scandal arose in connection with a company formed for utilizing "Traster" or "Treber" (husks of grain or grapes). Serious frauds were discovered, in which men in high positions were involved, and some of those responsible were convicted.

difficulties and the mischief caused by the Mirbach affair, and ends by saying that Mirbach must resign.

The more I think of the Kiel Week (from the 24th June to the 4th July) and the meeting with the King of England, which took place on the 25th to the 29th June, the clearer it seems to me that the drawbacks of such a meeting are at least equal to its advantages. Everyone is pretending that we are on the best possible terms with England, and that the two rulers have, at any rate for the time being, cleared up all difficulties. As a matter of fact, however, all the differences between the English and German peoples remain as they were, and such talk only serves to stimulate the zeal of all who make it their business to fan the fire of dissension.

The importance the Emperor attached to this visit was extraordinary. He interfered with the smallest details of the decoration of the *Hohenzollern*. A large canopy was spread over the promenade deck; the most beautiful floral decorations were commanded. Little fountains and waterfalls were designed to delight eye and ear. A dinner for 180 covers and a tea for 220 persons were arranged for the King. Such importance did the Emperor attribute to these things that he put on his parade uniform very early, and so arrayed had to pace the deck restlessly for three-quarters of an hour, hardly able to wait for the appointed time.

The King of England looked extremely well, for he had become considerably thinner and more agile. What a difference between the two rulers! True, there is a good deal in the King's private life which is open to criticism, but to-day he has all the glamour of a personality that has gained the high esteem of his country. I believe that he has acquired in his life an

experience of the world such as seldom falls to the lot of a royal personage. He has a keen knowledge of men, the value of which for a prince cannot be overestimated. Moreover, the constitution of England works so curiously that he can be made responsible for no failures, but still has ample scope for proving his tact and great power for good in his Empire. At the end of the Boer War the King used his influence to the greatest advantage, and the reign of Queen Victoria will surely figure in history as a proof not only how extraordinarily beneficial the English form of government is for the people, but also how it serves to strengthen the Throne.

A comparison of this system and King Edward's personality with that of our Emperor inevitably leads to the conclusion that no form of government is more dangerous than the one in which the sovereign rushes into the breach at every opportunity. The Emperor has undeniably great gifts, but they could not suffice to teach him what men really have been and are unless he lived and moved in the world and among men. What makes it difficult for him to know what the world really is, is his ideal of virtue. From the human standpoint it is certainly worthy of the highest praise. He does present us with a model of virtue and home-life, but when every sermon of every great preacher which he is allowed to hear is crammed full of flattering allusions, the inevitable result is that he develops a moral arrogance which is dangerously like the unctuousness of the Pharisee.

Only one who is familiar with the intimate life of a Court can have any idea of the incredible obsequiousness of these flattering sermons, of which I have heard so many. They have often caused me the deepest uneasiness, for they are more pernicious than can possibly

be imagined. But on one detail history should not omit to touch. Certain principles of morality were developed in the Kaiser in his youth by the influence of his teachers, and later by the panegyrics of obsequious servants, until they fostered the arrogant conviction that he was called on to play the judge over everybody and everything. Here I see a real danger affecting equally the domestic conditions of our country, foreign politics, and his intercourse with other crowned heads.

Even in his private life he itches to be a judge of everything, while his views on questions of cards and women are hard and severe, and show little knowledge of the world. His conviction of superior virtue often makes him fail to realise facts and possibilities, and suggests that he is threatened with megalomania. We need not seek elsewhere for reasons for the suspicion and the contempt which he often shows so offensively to everybody who happens to be near. If we add to this his many moments of unrestrained vehemence, it is not difficult to understand how impossible it is to express frank opinions when such a fit is on him.

Monarchs should always exercise the utmost caution in their private letters. Of this we had fresh proof when it was the policy of Germany to play off Russia against England and England against Russia. The letters of our Emperor to the Czar Nicholas II. were shown by him to his Foreign Minister, who never failed to communicate anything that he saw fit to the British Government at once. It is easy to see what an insight this gave the English into our political affairs.

Again, it is worth noticing, with regard to the repeal of the anti-Jesuit laws, that, about two years earlier, the

Liguori doctrines [1] had been brought to the Emperor's knowledge. They had, at that time, inspired his repeated declarations that the Jesuits should never be allowed to return to Germany.

The same thing happened with regard to the Two Years' Service. Often enough he asserted solemnly that the Three Years' Service would never be touched. He expressed this opinion immediately before a certain parade on the Tempelhof Field. After the parade he commanded the Two Years' Service.

He was much criticised for commanding the presence of the Ministers in Hamburg at the Gordon-Bennett Races, and now again in Kiel, which meant the interruption of parliamentary debates for some days. During that time all they did was to be guests at a dinner to King Edward, and to be presented to him. They had no kind of audience. The function was purely decorative and they had nothing to do. It is to be hoped that such commands will not be given too often in the future.

The Emperor's acceptance of invitations to Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt's magnificent yacht and Mrs. Goelet's *Nama* set everybody talking. The equipment of these yachts was of almost fairylike splendour. I had some interesting conversation with the Americans, among whom I might mention Mr. Armour and Mr. Robinson. A lady among Mr. Armour's guests was a palmist. All the gentlemen had their fortunes told. In spite of my objection I had to submit. She did me the honour of prophesying great future fame for me, in which she was

[1] The teaching of St. Alfonso Maria de Liguori (1692-1787) was to the effect that a doubtful law cannot impose a certain obligation. This "probabilist" doctrine became important in controversies between Church and State.

probably mistaken. It is worth putting on record that the Emperor, although he was very amiable to the lady, could not be induced to let her read his hand.

27th July 1904.

Even now nothing definite has been done in the Mirbach affair, and results have been worse than I feared. The Emperor and Empress are being held responsible for the system, and there are those who do not hesitate to believe that part of the money has been distributed for charitable purposes as though it had been contributed by their Majesties.

22nd August 1904.

It seems to me that it is growing more and more difficult to speak the truth to the Emperor. There are people, as for instance Countess Alvensleben, the wife of the Ambassador at St. Petersburg, who assert that they can manage it now and again. I believe that this is true, but unfortunately what she says is looked upon as amusing gossip and a little diversion—in other words, not taken seriously. In spite of most careful observation I have personally never noticed that anything she said had any effect whatsoever.

The Emperor's desire is not to be instructed but to be admired, praised, and confirmed in his own resolutions. He is so penetrated by the sense of his own superiority that he looks upon all attempts to enlighten him merely as irritating and presumptuous. Any exception to this rule is only an illusion, and indeed can only occur when he chances to be in the right mood, which does not happen often.

CHAPTER VI

GERMANY, RUSSIA, AND BRITAIN

Rominten, 1st October 1904.

SINCE the Naval Manœuvres there has been talk of a serious crisis. The Chief of the Cabinet, von Senden, and the Secretary of State, von Tirpitz, had certain differences. The difficulties had apparently grown more acute when both appeared here a few days ago for an audience. The dispute developed into a matter of some importance because the resignation of either would have been a great loss to the Navy. Both gentlemen arrived here at noon on the 28th, and owing to the important demands of sport they could not be received in audience. They stalked about like caged lions in the Zoological Gardens.

At last about ten o'clock in the morning of the 29th the audience, which had been so keenly anticipated and so much dreaded, took place; but after a quarter of an hour the Emperor received news that a royal stag had been unmistakably sighted. His Majesty immediately rushed out, and the two gentlemen, disappointed yet hopeful, had to continue their restless pacing to and fro the whole forenoon. The only train for Berlin in the twenty-four hours leaves here at 2.30 in the afternoon. There was no help for it. The stalk lasted until just before dinner, and the two gentlemen had to wait another day. But on the afternoon of the 29th the audience ended satisfactorily. All difficulties had

been overcome, and every one seemed to breathe again.

The Mirbach affair was finally settled at the end of September. Herr von Mirbach resigned his position in the Associations and in the household of the Empress, but as Chief Controller he remains. When he was at Swinemünde, on his way home from his Scandinavian cruise (the 29th August) the Emperor was firmly determined that he was to be dismissed from all his posts, including that of Chief Controller of the Empress's Household. However, at her Majesty's urgent request, it was agreed that he might remain her Chief Controller. When the Court returned to Berlin for the autumn, the report again was that he was to be dismissed. Finally, a compromise was accepted. I cannot help feeling that it was not to the advantage of the Crown, and that half-measures like these will not settle the matter, but will, on the contrary, succeed in saddling the Throne with responsibility for the whole affair.

It is hardly to be hoped that the last word has been spoken in this matter of Herr von Mirbach. The wisest thing would have been to induce Mirbach to retire at the very beginning and to appoint a Commission to establish all the facts. In this way we should have escaped many unpleasant public explanations. Calumny and suspicion can only be avoided by complete frankness in a case like this, in which an expenditure of £600,000 to £700,000 derived from charitable collections is involved. It must be admitted, too, that in these times the public, though it may not have a legal right to ask it, is at any rate morally entitled to demand complete information. It would have been politic to express disapproval at the outset of much that had been done, and to add the assurance that in future the

baits of distinctions, orders, and titles would no longer be dangled before aspirants, even for charitable purposes.

The Naval Manœuvres took place between the 7th and the 10th September. I was in personal attendance on the Emperor on the *Hohenzollern*, and I found it a particularly interesting experience to come into close contact with most of the highest personages in the German Navy. The general result of all I could observe is that the Navy is much benefited by the lively interest which His Majesty takes in it. Without this it would hardly make progress at all, and in this sense it is hardly an exaggeration to call him the creator of the German Navy. But, as in other cases, the interference of the Emperor in small things and in details causes no little difficulty and anxiety to the holders of the High Commands.

This appeared still more clearly in the great manœuvres which followed immediately afterwards. The Corps of the Guards and the IXth Army Corps were pitted against each other. The Emperor upset everything to such an extent that no operations could develop normally according to the rules of the game. Everything was confusion and mad haste. Artillery preparation there was none. His Majesty himself frequently rode into the firing-line in order to hustle everybody still more. A Major of the IXth Army Corps remarked drily to me: "What is the good of bringing our rifles with us, when we do not want them, and know we shall be able to drive a superior enemy force from the best possible positions without firing a shot?"

As a matter of fact, the Second Regiment of the Guards had taken a good and strongly held position from the IXth Army Corps without the expenditure of

a single cartridge. I am told that everybody, even the Umpires, usually know which way the wind is blowing, and their chief anxiety is to act accordingly. The net result is that the manœuvres of this year were just the same as last year's, and have not been an atom of use to either the troops or the General Staff.

People often talk of the demoralising effect of life at Court; but the servility and flattery indulged in by outsiders are so monstrous that even one who has spent his life at Court would find it physically impossible to bow so low.

When Prince Dohna in Rominten announces that a good stag has been sighted, he tries to look as if he had rushed into the Presence on a most important matter, and can hardly breathe for excitement and haste.

When the Emperor stopped at Danzig, on his way back from Rominten by way of Königsberg and the Marienburg, General von Mackensen, who was receiving him, kissed his gloved hand when he had finished his report. Such things find ready imitators. (I noticed that a Lieutenant, on receiving a decoration, kissed His Majesty's hand at the Casino of the Hussars of the Life Guards.) The Emperor half-playfully tweaked the officer in command of the First Regiment by the ear, but at the same time gave him an extremely serious lecture. When he was taking leave at the station General Mackensen even went so far as to give us a good imitation of tears.

Professor Slaby of the Technical High School at Charlottenburg was in the train between Danzig and Rominten. This gentleman, for whose learning I have the greatest respect and admiration, unfortunately passes all bounds in the matter of flattery and servility. One day he repeatedly assured the Emperor that

everybody, who had ever dared to resist the All Highest, had been obliged to confess himself wrong in the end. The natural result was that the Emperor said: "Well, that is so. My subjects ought to do what I tell them, but they always want to think for themselves, and that always leads to trouble."

I could go on for ever quoting such episodes, which, though trivial in themselves, are interesting because they make it clear how everyone panders to the Emperor's autocratic temper and artificially fosters its rapid growth.

There is a never-ceasing internal conflict in the Kaiser's mind; on the one hand his splendid gifts, his delight in ceaseless activity, his eagerness to look forward and to strive, like a true son of our times, for the good of his country and its development; on the other, his impulse to gather all the threads into his own hands and to rule as an absolute monarch. It must be everybody's hope that both the power of circumstances and the true nature of the Emperor will make for the victory of liberal ideas. Whatever the end may be, it is on this that the fate of the German people will very largely depend.

19th October 1904.

Last Sunday the Emperor said to me: "Our people do not come to Service in the Chapel. Make it your business to see that every place is always filled. If nothing else will do, draw up a rota and order everybody to report for duty in Chapel." This idea shows very characteristically how far he is prepared to carry outward observance. True religion can never be fostered and developed by force. I am always astonished by his illusions as to the effect of his attitude to the Church

on politics and society, for compulsion in such matters only provokes opposition and hypocrisy and corrupts and demoralises, which is exactly contrary to his intention.

Curiously enough a few days ago the Emperor mentioned that in his opinion the whole catastrophe of the Crown Princess of Saxony [1] was brought about by the Jesuits, because she had been too loyal to the Empire. The day before yesterday I had been commanded to see that Prince Hohenzollern did not come near the smoking-room, to which His Majesty had retired with the hereditary Prince of Meiningen, Prince Frederick Charles von Hesse, and several gentlemen of his suite, to discuss some political matter. Taken with other things this indicates the growth of certain animosities and suspicions against the Catholic Church, which certainly did not exist to this extent before, and must certainly have been fostered by methods of which I know nothing. It would be very curious if this should be more than a passing phase and have a lasting effect.

3rd November 1904.

The complications between England and Russia which have become acute after the bombardment of the Hull fishing fleet [2] by the Baltic Squadron are interesting the Emperor enormously. His imagination is so fully occupied by them that a few days ago, in the presence of the servants, he spoke of their possible consequences with all and sundry of his familiars. He ordered the Chief of the General Staff, the Minister of War, the Secretary of the Navy, etc., to solve the following problem : " The English are now showing the

[1] The Crown Princess of Saxony, formerly Princess Louise of Tuscany, was divorced in 1902, after eloping with a M. Giron, the tutor of her children.

[2] The Dogger Bank incident, Oct. 21, 1904.

world that they are autocrats of the sea. They are interfering even in German affairs. They themselves frequently supply the Russians with coal for the cruises of the Baltic Squadron, and yet they are arbitrarily insisting that Germany shall not do this, and they are even threatening us with a blockade. Now what are we to do?"

The other day His Majesty discussed the question after dinner, while he was smoking a cigar in the billiard room of the New Palace, with Lieutenant-General von Moltke, the probable future Chief of the General Staff. The Crown Prince, Prince Eitel Frederick, some invited guests, the Equerries, and some adjutants of the Princes were in the room. He had said that every solution of the problem, so far proposed, seemed to him wrong, and even the Chief of the General Staff and General von Moltke himself were on the wrong tack. In his opinion the only solution was as follows:

"There can be no question of any action of the German Fleet against the British Fleet. The English Fleet has such numerical superiority, that the German Fleet, even if it were led with the utmost skill and showed the greatest courage, even if it were sacrificed entirely, could only destroy one-half of England's sea power; consequently the English with their undisputed superiority could completely blockade our coasts. It would be a crime to sacrifice the German Fleet. On the other hand, since the relations between France and England are so cordial that they may almost be called allies, we should, in this serious situation, keep on good terms with England, and attack France."

This eccentric proposal is characteristic of him, and shows how even an intellect as powerful as that of the

Emperor can be entirely captured and misled by imagination. England would surely like nothing better than to see us embroiled with France, for Germany, which is England's strongest competitor in the world market, would then have her hands full. If Germany were thus paralysed, and if, in addition, England had a pretext for blockading the German coast, she would be entirely rid of the competition which is so troublesome to her. In other words, the solution of the difficulty which the Emperor suggested would be the worst possible for Germany, and so favourable for England that she herself could hardly dare to hope for it.

And how did General von Moltke behave? In the presence of about ten people, including some junior officers, he meekly allowed his own solution to be condemned, and submissively declared that the policy outlined by His Majesty was the only one possible; and yet a man of his judicial intelligence, so highly trained as a soldier, must have seen how fantastic and utopian this whole disquisition was. But he said not a word! Seeing that the Emperor has for some days been praising his own solution to the skies, I can only assume that other eminent authorities who have been consulted, have taken refuge in eloquent silence. There is grave peril in all this. As I have explained more than once already, it is not so great as one would at first sight suppose, but it remains a danger, and it is surely unwise to talk high politics like this in the presence of the uninitiated.

There are moments when the conclusion is inevitable that we are marching backwards. There are some rays of hope, but they cannot blind us to the fact that it is only in a few respects that we are progressing. Tacitus once said: "Nobody dares to say what he thinks, and everybody says what he does not think."

This is the most dangerous aspect of our more recent developments, which must breed intrigue, lack of moral fibre, and cowardice. We feel that much is out of joint, but our only object is to deceive the world and ourselves, and rush from gaiety to gaiety. Will the world allow itself to be hoodwinked for ever by our solemn pageants ? I am afraid that in the end we shall deceive none but ourselves.

When I read over what I have written, I am often astonished at the pessimism into which I have allowed myself to fall. This shows clearly how misleading momentary impressions may be, and how dangerous it is to yield too readily to impulse.

It cannot be denied that Count Bülow has a conspicuous talent for the adroit handling of difficult situations, and one cannot but admire his eloquence in Parliament; but speeches and ingenuity will not alter essential facts or remedy abuses. For that you want a Reformer, but he must not be a reformer in words alone. At the present moment I see no sign of one. Far be it from me to belittle the services of Count Bülow. With his virtuosity in finding ways out of dilemmas, he has done yeoman service more than once to the Throne and to Germany, and has strengthened her political position both at home and abroad.

His office was certainly not an easy one. I remember, for instance, one day Count Eulenburg once reproached him, half in earnest, with being too submissive to the Emperor. He answered quite seriously : " You cannot have the faintest idea what I have prevented, and how much of my time I must devote to restoring order where our All Highest master has created chaos."

A few days ago the Emperor spoke very reproachfully of the small amount of capital that was being in-

vested in Prussian State securities. It almost sounded as if he said: "If this hint is not enough for you, I will one fine day issue orders." It might perhaps be possible to remedy this to a certain extent by compulsion, for instance, by prescribing the investment of trust funds in German securities, etc., but it is more than doubtful whether confidence would be increased by any such measures, and this is after all the only essential thing, because Germany has still plenty of savings to invest.

I should say: "Pursue a policy, in domestic as well as in foreign affairs, that will merit confidence, and you will see how glad everybody will be to buy State securities. But if you cannot win this confidence —and that is the point where it seems you have not succeeded—no precautionary measures will give you any real success. Perhaps there are already threatening clouds on the financial horizon, although till a few years ago anyone would have been justified in describing the state of Prussian finances as particularly satisfactory."

The Emperor takes his position as Honorary Commander of foreign regiments very seriously. One day, for example, he wanted, without any preparation and without giving any warning, to pay a flying visit to Russia in order to surprise his Russian Regiment and inspect it. It cost us a good deal of trouble to prevent him. The way in which he kept up relations with his English Regiment [1] bothered the authorities in London so much that they sent it to India, although it was one of those which had the privilege of always being stationed at home except in war time. The Kaiser was very much hurt by this, and repeatedly said that he positively took it as a personal slight. It did not enter

[1] 1st Royal Dragoons.

his head that he made himself a nuisance to the English with his interference, or if it did, he could not see that it mattered, and did not give it a second thought. In the same way he carefully followed the fortunes of his regiments in war time, and kept in telegraphic touch with them all the time. He was really delighted in his heart of hearts when his Viborg Regiment distinguished itself so at Shaho, and he spoke about it as if it had been a Prussian regiment. Yet according to reports received here the regiment had wasted all its ammunition and was held up at the decisive moment by huge rocks which the Japanese rolled down from the mountains. The Emperor is particularly fond of discussing this episode and embroidering the story.

There are other things beside foreign regiments which he thinks of the highest importance. He is no less proud of his foreign honours, especially his position as a British Admiral, and so it happens that at quite an ordinary reception at the British Embassy he will appear in the British Naval uniform. Whenever he goes to hear "The Flying Dutchman" at the Opera he always appears as a naval officer, which shows how he is obsessed by this question of clothes and externals.

Herr von Kotze, the Master of the Ceremonies, takes these matters more seriously still. One day when he was walking in Unter den Linden one of his friends made a remark about the particularly bright green tie he was wearing. With the utmost solemnity he answered: "His Majesty has gone hunting to-day."

6th November 1904.

The recent debate in the French Chambers was being discussed yesterday, and the Emperor said: "It is good

for us, that they should make thorough fools of themselves in the face of the whole world. That shows once more how fundamentally pitiable parliamentary government is." Naturally everybody who was present adopted the same tone, and some even managed to go a step further.

In the evening about eighteen guests were being entertained, and among them Dr. Dryander,[1] His Excellency the Court Chaplain, who interests me exceedingly. His demeanour in Court circles is extremely clever and subtle, and his handsome person reminds one of an Abbé of the *ancien régime*. His conversation is witty ; he is a master of language, and his sermons in many respects are works of art. But their chief merit is their supple literary form, a characteristic which they share with his personality as a whole. Like so many ecclesiastics, he can talk himself into a belief in many things which are really in flat contradiction to his faith, and this leads to the most marked byzantinism. One might almost think that some of these parsons, when they try to curry favour by echoing His Majesty's words and turning the limelight on to his virtues, are really speaking with conviction, and this makes them at once so effective and so dangerous.

A few days ago the Emperor, who has recently been much incensed against England, remarked : " Just imagine, my wife received not a single telegram from England for her birthday. Of course one can hardly assume that this was unintentional, for the English Court has surely a diary, which is kept as carefully as our own." I sincerely hope that this incident, which I must admit in itself looks like a kind of a challenge, will not result in lasting bad feeling, and will in time be

[1] Dr. Dryander (1843-1921). Principal Court Chaplain from 1890.

reduced to its proper importance as a mere want of good manners. At the moment, however, it cannot be denied that it has caused a deep grudge against England and the warmest sympathy for Russia, but we are accustomed to see such sympathies changing almost daily, and there are occasions when that is not altogether a disadvantage.

When I read these lines, I cannot help wondering if, when I return to them in my old age, I shall be able to say honestly to myself that I was less byzantine than the others whom I criticised. Though I have tried honestly to maintain the greatest possible reserve, and have often been silent when I should have won favour by expressing enthusiastic approval, there were nevertheless many moments when I was much dissatisfied with myself. Circumstances in this world are often stronger than we ourselves, and this is just why I am trying in these notes to keep alive my own opinion that this byzantinism is dangerous and contemptible. I feel the force of this the more because it so often seems to me that, in circumstances such as mine, one's sense of these things is apt to become completely blunted.

13th November 1904.

The Emperor's peculiar way of treating people often causes uneasiness and anxiety to those who are well-disposed to him, but do not really know him, and do not understand that he often does not intend to be taken quite seriously. Those who are not familiar with him cannot understand his habit of telling curious, sometimes even very doubtful, stories, and his slangy talk and horseplay, which would be well enough for a rowdy

student, irritate the people by whose opinion he should set the most store.

We had several examples of this during the recent hunting expedition in Silesia. One of the worst sufferers seems to have been Colonel von B., who was in command of a cavalry regiment. His Majesty held him down for a long time in the snow and, to the great delight of all the spectators, rubbed snow all over him, just in the way a school bully would treat a weaker boy. All the assembled guests and hundreds of Upper Silesian beaters saw everything.

Still worse was the case of Count Roger Seherr-Dobrau. Remember, he is a Prussian Chamberlain, a Life Member of the Prussian Upper House, he has two sons who are officers in the Hussars and Life Guards, is fifty-three years of age, and has vast estates and a highly respected position in Silesia. When he first met him, the Emperor said in quite a loud voice : " What, you old pig, are you invited here too ? " Everyone in the neighbourhood, even the ladies, could hear distinctly what he said. Count Seherr was naturally indignant and did not fail to express his feelings to his nearest friends. The Emperor has not the faintest idea what enemies he makes by such recklessness, and how deeply such unmannerliness must wound his victims.

14*th November* 1904.

Recently the Emperor spoke a good deal about home politics in connection with the results of the Italian Elections. It was his opinion, he said, that a combination of all the anti-socialist elements in Germany would permit the Government to act with good effect independently of the Centre. For myself, I find, in

view of the distribution of parties, that a majority to the right of the Social-Democrats could only be secured if the Centre joins it. Consequently the Centre remains master of the situation. A coalition, such as there was some time ago, with the National Liberals independently of the Centre is quite impossible in the present constitution of the House.

It also seems to me very unlikely that in any new election the Social-Democrats will lose much strength, and that the Liberals will make corresponding gains. I rather think that the Social-Democrats will gain ground. If the chief aim is to make the Government independent of the Centre, which I myself would very honestly wish, the only thing is—look at it in whatever way you like—to stand in with the Socialists and work with them.

During this autumn the Duchess Cecilia, who is engaged to the Crown Prince, stayed in the New Palace for some time. The whole impression that she makes is uncommonly favourable. Although she is not exactly beautiful, her grace and natural amiability charm everybody. Her intellectual gifts and the variety of her interests are thrown into relief by a modesty and natural simplicity which are rare in royal personages. About her sister, too, the Princess Christian of Denmark, I have received nothing but the most favourable reports from good authorities.

One cannot help wondering that the Grand Duchess Anastasia,[1] who is not universally approved of, and whose reputation leaves something to be desired, should be the mother of two such exceptionally well-educated daughters. The relations between the parents of the bridegroom and the mother of the bride are not without

[1] The Duchess Cecilia's mother died in 1921.

psychological interest. The Duchess Cecilia was made first of all to feel that her general views on life are not shared by them. This was particularly emphasised at the gala dinner at Schwerin, when the Emperor spoke at length on the engagement, without saying a syllable about the bride's mother. Next, their Majesties insisted most energetically that the bride should on no account be allowed to spend another winter in Cannes. The implication naturally was that the mother's manner of life there and her surroundings were considered unsuitable, perhaps even harmful, for the bride of the Crown Prince. The Empress went so far as to say that, if it was impossible to avoid the bride's wintering in Cannes, the Crown Prince must solve the problem by marrying her beforehand.

As it turned out, the Grand Duchess begged to be excused from visiting the New Palace this autumn, and allowed her daughter to stay there alone, and the Grand Duchess has now been quietly in Cannes for some time, the very thing which was first of all declared to be impossible. It is not likely that the mother of the bride and her parents-in-law will ever really understand each other; for on the one side we have self-righteousness and uncompromising opinions, and on the other natural simplicity and knowledge of the world.

Curious as it may seem, the relationship between the Emperor and the King of England has to a certain extent its roots in the same psychological grounds. The latter is, as a man of the world, immensely the superior of the Emperor, and we can only hope that this superiority will be counterbalanced by other qualities. Otherwise it might in certain eventualities cost us very dear.

19th November 1904.

We have spent several evenings lately in the New Palace quite quietly without any guests. Her Majesty, one or two ladies, a Chamberlain, His Majesty, two Equerries and one Controller. On such occasions the conversation is usually far from animated. The natural consequence is that any unsuspecting new-comer, who has put his foot in it by a few casual remarks, is at once driven into his shell, so that at these meals in the intimate circle it is the Emperor himself, who makes practically the whole of the conversation. We sometimes, however, hear a harmless and amusing anecdote from one guest or another. After dinner we move from the Apollo Hall into the tea-room, and the Emperor usually very soon withdraws to the billiard-room. The report of the officer on the guard does not take many minutes, and then maps are laid on the billiard-table, and a brief discussion follows with the adjutants on the various phases of the Russo-Japanese war. Occasionally the Empress with her ladies and the Chamberlains join us in the billiard-room. There is a large table, on which telegrams, reports, newspaper cuttings, possibly even new books are arranged for His Majesty, and some books are laid out for the Empress. She takes her seat at this table, and generally does some needlework. The Emperor smokes cigarettes and sometimes a cigar, but, apart from this, the Empress never allows any gentleman of her suite or any of the guests to smoke in her presence.

On occasions the Emperor too takes his seat at the table and reads out the telegrams, or some interesting reports, or has them read to him. In the meantime the ladies and gentlemen have grouped themselves

round the large table, and begun, while His Majesty is reading to himself, to dip into the various books and papers which are provided. Most of us feel that these evenings pass very slowly, although we generally finish between half-past ten and a quarter to eleven.

A few days ago the Emperor had been reading to himself the whole evening, and then suddenly said to the Empress: "Do you mean to spend the night here?" The Empress said: "No, William, but I did not want to disturb you, as you have been so busy reading the whole evening." To which the Emperor replied: "Well, what else could I do? It is so incredibly dull here."

During the last two days before the journey to Kiel, the Emperor was obviously anxious to escape from the somewhat monotonous atmosphere of the New Palace to the Castle in Berlin. On two mornings there were to be lectures on naval tactics at the Technical High School, and he hoped to be able to get rid of the ladies for a time. At first he simply announced that he was going across one morning, and said nothing about returning, or any other arrangements. The Empress was a little uneasy, and tried to persuade him to get back to dinner after the lecture, but this he point blank refused to do. It never occurred to the Empress that what he really wanted was to be undisturbed in Berlin, and she came over to dinner, which only increased the Emperor's coolness. He said still less about further arrangements, and finally in the afternoon he decided to spend the evening too in Berlin, and the Empress too remained.

In the evening at supper he was so reserved and cold to her, that she at last became quite unhappy. Immediately after the meal he said to her quite roughly:

"I have work to do, and will retire to my own apartments." He went to his own rooms, which are on the other side of the Pillar Hall, instead of going to their common apartments, as he usually did. In the meantime the Empress suddenly decided that she would accompany him to Kiel, and then leave him there and go to Plön. He had probably guessed this, and during the whole of the second day in Berlin he did not thaw. It is hard to understand why the Empress, who is so clever in important domestic affairs, does not know how to avoid such painful situations. It is still stranger that, in spite of it all, she has such great influence over the Emperor, although he so frequently avoids her, and in his brilliant and modern way of thinking has nothing in common with her.

This morning at Kiel she went so far as to accompany him to the swearing in of the recruits. Short addresses were given by the Evangelical minister and by the Catholic priest, and these were followed by a speech by the Emperor, and an expression of thanks by Prince Henry. Then there was a lunch in the naval officers' Casino, and we again heard speeches from Prince Henry and the Emperor. At two o'clock followed the launch of the *Deutschland* in the Germania dock. The Imperial Chancellor made a speech, and the Emperor yet another. This evening there is a big dinner at the Palace of Prince Henry, and in all probability we shall hear more oratory from the Prince and His Majesty. That makes a total of ten speeches in one day about the same things, and expressing the same ideas to more or less the same audience. Naturally such speeches vary in quality, and there are occasions when His Majesty is guilty of incautious and impolitic utterances.

He said, for instance, that an army of pious fighters

is always invincible, and will always be so. I cannot help thinking of the pious Russians, who in spite of their greatness and numerical superiority have everywhere, both by sea and on land, been beaten by non-Christian Japan this year. In Prince Henry's speech there was the passage: "Your Majesty will never endure such tragic experiences with Your Navy, as we have recently observed in other places and other countries." As a rule these speeches are full of byzantine flattery and incredible self-glorification. The air is thick with incense, and no wonder that both speakers and listeners fall easy victims to delusions and deceptions.

Just as we were going across to the Germania dock in the launch, His Majesty said: "One might say this is the weather of the Katzbach." [1] I am naturally far from wishing to think that the Emperor imagined that there might be any comparison between a launch and such a decisive battle, but still one cannot help feeling anxious when such an idea could even pass through his fancy. These many speeches, these spectacles, all this ceremony, all this swearing in of recruits, the consecration of standards, these endless processions and parades, really seem as if they made some people think we had won a big battle. I should like to know how we could devise any special way of celebrating a victory, should we ever win one, for our celebrations are, as it is, the last word in outward splendour.

21st November 1904.

The Emperor's sensitiveness to press comment sometimes surprises me. I have seen him get very excited

[1] A decisive victory was won near Liegnitz on the Katzbach by Blücher on Aug. 26, 1813, over the French army under Macdonald in a storm of rain.

when somebody tells him, or he happens in his reading to come across some tiny inaccuracies and mistakes concerning his own life. This gives the mischief-makers a splendid chance to represent such matters as if some personal spite against the Emperor was at the bottom of it all, and they do not fail to tell him that he can only protect himself against such outrages by punishing them with relentless energy. In this connection our ladies bear a heavy responsibility. No doubt they all mean extremely well, but their judgment is obscured by their birth and education. They move only in the most narrow-minded society, they are blinded by prejudice and ignorance of the world, and rely too much on the intervention of Providence. I remember one day in the New Palace, when there was general depression on account of unsatisfactory political news, Fräulein von Gersdorf remarked three times over in the presence of their Majesties: "God will not forsake us," and it struck no one as odd.

The effects of the attitude which the Kaiser assumes in his relations with the Press are not limited to himself personally, but have far-reaching political consequences. There are two main reasons for his complete estrangement and the irritation which he sometimes displays, not merely to the sections of the Left but also to those of the Right, as, for instance, the Agrarians. In the first place, they will not act as he wishes; and in the second place, their utterances in their Press, at their meetings, and in their literature serve to stimulate this spirit of opposition which has such prejudicial effects on the general political situation.

This is equally the case with regard to foreign politics. For some time past the Emperor has looked on our relations with England as very strained. He always

returns to the view that war with England is not only possible but practically inevitable, and is convinced that it is England's aim to bring a serious conflict about. But through it all it is clear how much weight the Emperor attaches to the English Press, and how slighting to himself and how menacing to Germany he feels its attitude to be. The speedy subsidence of the English Press feud against Russia, even after the Hull affair, while the opposition to Germany continues and is not prevented by the Government, strikes him as a particularly serious symptom. My personal feeling is that there is a far greater risk of England embroiling us with another Great Power than of her striking at us herself. Above all, I hardly believe that she will attack us as long as we are careful to avoid any provocation. Up to now we have been running after England in the most humiliating way, and, on the other hand, have intrigued against her with Russia. The injudicious attitude of the German nation during the Boer War aroused feelings of hatred which have not yet been forgotten. Besides, we are England's most dangerous competitors in every branch of commerce and industry.

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On Wednesday 21st November there was a good deal of excitement on board the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.*, which the Emperor made his headquarters during his stay in Kiel. When he was inspecting the shipbuilding yards he had noticed some deck semaphores. Then he remembered suddenly that he had introduced these into the Navy, but had not seen them in use on board the ships for some considerable time. He referred to the matter at dinner and said, with some emphasis, that he

hoped they had not fallen into disuse. Very cautiously Admirals Köster, Tirpitz, Senden, Büchel, and others tried to explain that they had proved very unsatisfactory in practice, and that was why they had not been used as much as before. As a matter of fact, they were all out of use and simply stored in the yards. The gist of what the Admirals said was that better ways of communication with other ships had been found. They seriously obstructed the free view of the officers on the bridge and, finally, they made such a clatter that in a fog the officers of the watch could not hear the siren of any other ship in time, so that they increased the risks of collision very seriously. In reply to these criticisms the Emperor simply said that he had some time ago introduced this system of signalling on his ships, and desired to see it restored.

We most of us thought that was an end to the matter for the present, but after dinner the agitation of the Admirals who were walking up and down the deck was very noticeable. They began to discuss whether it would not be possible in some way or other to modify this command of His Majesty, or to water it down in time. The Emperor noticed it, and perhaps also he had overheard something. He suddenly made for the group of Admirals and asked them sternly and in a very loud voice: "What is the meaning of all this talk? Are my commands obeyed in my Navy or are they not?" There was universal alarm and complete silence. On the same evening at supper Admiral von Köster was already able to report that the semaphores had been installed again in every ship of the Fleet.

It not infrequently happens that Prince Henry disagrees with the Emperor on naval matters. It was

reported that on this very day he said to several naval officers: "Can't he help meddling in such things?" . . .

I mentioned some time ago that no member of the English Royal Family had sent the usual telegram of congratulation on the Empress's birthday. The Emperor told us the other day that he had requested the British Ambassador to discover the cause of this omission.

I have no doubt that London has got wind of some of our most confidential communications to St. Petersburg. There must certainly be people at the Russian Court who have the best reasons for making sure that England is kept well informed. It is more than probable that some of the things that the Emperor has said in the presence of a large number of people, even foreigners, has given serious displeasure in the highest quarters in England. When the most secret and intimate matters are discussed so often not only in the presence of the suite, but also before casual visitors, and even servants, any idea of secrecy is out of the question. Most of the ideas of the Emperor must become public property. The worst of it is that often enough things are only half-heard and so misunderstood, and are then spread abroad in a dangerously exaggerated form. It is obvious that malicious perversions are a very fruitful soil for intrigue of every kind.

Inspections, discussions of the shipbuilding programme, and very interesting audiences occupied the three days of the Emperor's stay, and he showed what an exceptional interest he takes in everything connected with the Navy.

2nd December 1904.

This morning there was a small luncheon in the Japanese room. Besides myself, Count Alvensleben,[1] the Ambassador, the Aide-de-Camp von Müller, and Count Soden were of the party. The Emperor spoke almost uninterruptedly about the Russo-Japanese War. I was astonished that he should see fit to repeat so many fantastic stories, which apparently had been told him during his hunting expeditions in Silesia. When he is in certain moods and listening to certain people he can be amazingly credulous, and with his vivid imagination and impulsive temperament he cannot help embroidering such stories with still more unlikely details. Anyhow, he was in high good humour. This was probably because he saw a chance of being able to stay in Berlin some time after his return from Silesia, and not to have to go to the New Palace because there was a risk of influenza there. I am under the impression that his anxiety to escape from the monotony of family life is growing on him.

7th December 1904.

The Emperor is particularly fond of letting his imagination dwell on what would happen if the Baltic Fleet were to cruise round Africa instead of the Far East, and suddenly to descend on the coast of India, which is practically unprotected. In his heart of hearts he is not at all well disposed to England, and therefore loves to busy himself with thoughts of a possible revolution in India, a peace at any price with Japan, to be followed by a Russian invasion from the north-west.

[1] Count Alvensleben, German Ambassador in St. Petersburg.

Then he discussed the army of General Linievitch. This, as we all know, is to operate from Vladivostok, and, according to the precise information he says he has received, only numbers 5000 men. He loves to tell us that Cossacks are of absolutely no use. They only loot and steal, and as they did nothing except give a great deal of trouble to the commissariat, they had long since been sent home, although we still heard a great deal about them.

The Emperor has his own explanation of the Conscription Riots. He says that when 4000 men are wanted, 10,000 are called up. The 6000 who pay the necessary bribe are rejected by the authorities as unfit; but the indignation of the others, and still more that of their families and dependents, results in many riots. Then he will go on to tell many comic stories connected with the corruption rampant everywhere in Russia, but when he discusses the matter a little more seriously he says: "How can things be any different in a country where no ship can be bought without the Grand Duke Alexis, the Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet, pocketing a quarter of a million roubles?" He then develops at length a very fruitful theme—the Grand Duke's way of spending his money on ladies of no reputation, and his favourite story is that of the new wing which he is having built in his palace in St. Petersburg for his particular favourite, Mlle. Balletta.

The Emperor is, on the other hand, delighted that the danger of a Franco-Russian alliance is for the moment removed from our path by the Russo-Japanese War; but none the less he is very well disposed to Russia. Indeed, he has gone so far as to consider quite seriously if he should not place one of the best of our German

naval officers at the disposal of the Baltic Fleet. The Russians had asked for such assistance. It had been arranged, he said, that the officer in question should hand in his papers and after a decent interval quietly appear in the Russian Fleet. In the end, however, the Emperor decided to reject this plan out of considerations of neutrality and the fear of possible consequences with Japan. But in contrast with this is his very favourite remark that if Ballin had not worked out the plan for the cruise of the Baltic Fleet, and had not given it every possible assistance, the Fleet would scarcely have got so far.[1]

He constantly complains of the Czar's dilatoriness and indecision. "When I write to him," he said, "I cannot get an answer in less than three months. It is this sort of thing," he added, "that brought about the Russo-Japanese War." A few weeks before the outbreak of war the Japanese had submitted to the Czar a proposal of intervention from England. He kept this proposal before him, but he took two months to consider it without answering it. In the meantime preparations in the Far East were hurried on and relations grew more and more strained. Japan suspected that Russia was only playing for time, and was determined to take the first step and launch the offensive, which led to the war. A strong sidelight is thrown on the Emperor's pessimistic views of Russia's future by the fact that, in spite of the advice of his financial experts, he ordered the sale of the Russian securities which are part of his private fortune.

[1] I believe that the only thing Ballin did was to sell some of the older derelicts as cruisers to Russia and thus effect a profitable bargain for the Hamburg America Company.—*Author's Note.*

10th December 1904.

The Emperor's anxiety about our relations with England has been extraordinary these last few days. Somebody who had an audience with him said that he was so preoccupied with these English troubles that he could hardly listen to what was being said to him. The idea of a compromise with France in case of conflict with England is very distasteful to me. I suspect that, as is so often the case, he has not thought out this policy to its final consequences. Is it at all possible to carry it out? Perhaps, but only in certain circumstances.

I spoke the other day with one of my colleagues about the inquiry the Emperor had made of the British Ambassador. Curiously enough, his instructions to ask the English Court why the usual telegram of congratulations for the Empress's birthday was not sent did not strike London as so inopportune. My own personal conviction, however, is that we shall never get an answer to this question, nor do I believe that even if we do, it will help to improve or clear up matters.

This morning the long and eagerly expected letter from the Czar reached His Majesty. He was delighted and greatly excited. We have to wait longer and longer for these letters every time, and they always arrive too late. Sometimes the joy of anticipation lasts for months. I myself am very sceptical about this correspondence between the two rulers. It is hardly possible to expect any advantageous political results of importance; on the other hand, confidential letters may have most unpleasant consequences if they should chance to travel beyond St. Petersburg—to London, for example.

24th December 1904.

Their Majesties are very much agitated by the news received from Russia that disturbances have broken out, especially in St. Petersburg, and that the military have taken energetic action. The Emperor naturally considers the question in the first place from the military point of view ; he hardly stops to consider that a country cannot be ruled by force alone for any length of time. The idea that no Government can achieve anything without the goodwill of the majority of the people does not appeal to him. I was very much surprised by the simple and natural question of the Empress : " What, even if the Government gets the upper hand now, is to happen after the *shooting*." Take it all in all, the Emperor was more cautious than I might have expected.

In the middle of his conversation he quite irrelevantly introduced a highly interesting story. When he came to the throne, he said he received a sealed envelope which in obedience to the wishes of King Frederick William IV. was to be handed to each King of Prussia in succession. He had opened this envelope, and had found in it the political testament of Frederick William IV. in which he had earnestly urged his successors lose no time in annulling the Constitution which had been wrung from him by force. The Emperor added : " Except Friedberg, not a soul had the smallest inkling of this document, although it has already passed through the hands of my grandfather and father." Finally the Emperor said very seriously and in a comparatively low voice as if to himself : " What disasters this document could have caused. It is inconceivable. I took it upon myself to destroy it with my own hands."

This story, told, in contrast to the Emperor's usual

custom, so naturally and so simply, affected me not a little. His habit of speaking on the impulse of the moment, his undoubted leanings to absolutism, had given me an entirely different picture of him. This heightened the effect of the story and made his action the more impressive.

CHAPTER VII

DIFFICULTIES OF PERSONAL GOVERNMENT

Middle of January 1905.

IT is not one of the pleasantest things to be in attendance at Christmas time in the New Palace. For instance, the Empress, the Princes, and the ladies and gentlemen who happen to be present, spend two whole evenings in the Shell Hall decorating the Christmas-tree. Even the Emperor joins in, and it is only when it becomes too tedious that he takes to looking through reports and newspaper cuttings. As the work begins immediately after supper and continues till midnight, the young Princes try to while away the time by playing all sorts of pranks. They throw nuts at each other, and bedeck themselves with little toy decorations, which are meant to look funny. They took the Crown Prince by surprise, and pushed him into a washing basket, which had been filled with Christmas presents, and to the great delight of all present carried him round the room. Towards the end of the evening the Emperor egged on the Princes who were present to throw me, too, into the basket. I could see the danger that was threatening me, but there was no escape, for the four Princes were closing in on me from all sides, with the Duke of Coburg and the very energetic master of the ceremonies, Herr von Knesebeck. I must admit that at my age it was extremely disagreeable to me to have to submit to such a

practical joke, but I put a bold face on it. As I was decanted out of the basket again in front of the ladies and all the assembled company, I said: "What a wonderful feeling it is to be carried about the room by four Princes." The Emperor was not best pleased with these words. I rather think he still bears me a grudge for them.

The Empress was particularly gracious to me on the following day, and apparently wished to remove the bad impression. Princess Feodora, and her lady-in-waiting, Fräulein von Röder, said to me: "What an amazingly good courtier you are to be able to say, 'It was magnificent to be carried about like that!'" Like everything else at Court this little incident was quickly forgotten in the endlessly varied procession of men and things. Only the Emperor seemed to have remembered something of it. I think he would have preferred to see me show more signs of humiliation.

As we were returning from the funeral in Coburg, the Emperor said he knew very well that Japan had already made two peace proposals to Russia. Reforms in Russia, he said, were suicide—*harakiri* of the Government. He is too apt to believe in the absolute necessity of ruling Russia by force. The King of Bulgaria, he said, had told him at the funeral in Coburg that things could not go on as they were in the Balkans, and that the personality of the Sultan was an ever-growing menace and danger to international politics. The Emperor related that he had answered: "Please do not alter the political situation with a dagger or a cup of black coffee."

29th January 1905.

It is not without its perils that the Emperor as a rule only reads extracts, and never looks at a complete paper. The Foreign Office, which sends him these cuttings, has complete control of the matter, and can extend or limit the Emperor's reading about the events of the day. It does this at its own sweet will, and can thus make him think what it wants him to.

It has often struck me how remarkably the articles submitted to His Majesty always reflect any opinion which the Foreign Office happens to be holding at that particular moment. This explains how the Emperor is so often completely ensnared by particular ideas of which the Foreign Office approves.

30th January 1905.

The bestowals of the Order of the Black Eagle, the appointments of Field Marshals, and more particularly the decoration of the Russian General Stoessel, as well as the Japanese General Nogi with the Order *pour le mérite* are very severely condemned by some critics. There is no doubt that many of these decorations lose in value, if they are given too often. Any departure from the rule to appoint as Field Marshals only those who have held a high command before the enemy is much to be regretted. The decorations given to General Stoessel and General Nogi are, after all, a matter for their own war-lords; but the fact that the Emperor has taken it on himself to bestow them is a step of doubtful wisdom, because it is not at all certain how far their merits are admitted in their own armies.

"Only a good Christian can be a good soldier." This

dictum, which the Emperor is so fond of repeating, is in curious contrast to this action. Most critics are quite justified in finding fault with these impulsive doings of the Emperor, but the world at large goes too far in the pessimistic conclusions it draws from them. Some of these vagaries certainly do not tend to increase the respect in which Germany is held in other countries and produce an uncomfortable sensation at home; but we may solace ourselves with the thought that time reduces them to their proper importance, and after all they only bring out the essentially great and original personality of the Emperor in a stronger light.

His unswerving sense of duty, his strictly moral way of life, his great intellectual activity, and his interest in every question that may further progress in Germany, are *imponderabilia* (to use a term now in fashion), which will have a more favourable effect on the future than his critical contemporaries imagine. There is real danger, however, in his habit of committing himself to particular sets of ideas, in his intolerance of contradiction, and in the constantly growing difficulty of dealing with him. For a long time past the most important thing that has to be taken into account in choosing those who will have to be in personal contact with the Emperor has been, not their abilities, but whether they will understand how to manage him. Thus, since it is just with men in the highest positions that the Emperor has the most frequent intercourse, it follows that many chief office-bearers of to-day are adroit courtiers but can scarcely claim in virtue of their abilities to be considered eminent statesmen or soldiers.

This choice of personalities, the difficulty of mentioning to His Majesty opinions in the least different from

his own, and the tendencies to autocracy which are gradually penetrating downwards are the real dangers of our time. Every patriotic and sincere German is inspired with the earnest wish that our country may be preserved from serious dangers at home and abroad. The Emperor's autocratic manner is undoubtedly finding many imitators: the majority of the highest officers and officials are showing an increasing tendency to reactionary views. Centralisation is growing; everywhere there is supervision and personal interference. The independence of all subordinates is being restricted more and more every day.

States degenerate not so much because the lower orders have too much power and independence, but rather because the ruling classes arrogate more and more power to themselves, and hamper every independent movement which has its roots in the daily life and needs of the masses.

31st January 1905.

No fewer than thirty-four Princely guests were expected for the 25th January and the following day for the celebrations of His Majesty's birthday. I had been in the office the whole day long and went home at 4.30, and was due at the Castle again for dinner and to do my spell of duty in the usual way. About half-past six I received a telephonic message: "His Majesty has cancelled all the birthday celebrations and sent telegrams to the guests, some of whom are already on the way, asking them not to come to Berlin, as the illness of Prince Eitel Friedrich makes any kind of function impossible."

The physicians had thought it their duty to inform

His Majesty that the inflammation of the Prince's lungs, if not exactly dangerous, was at any rate serious. Thereupon the Emperor had immediately telegraphed to the Prince of the Asturias, who had already arrived in Paris from Madrid, and begged him not to come to Berlin.

He had also sent for Count Eulenburg and said to him : " In consequence of the illness of Prince Eitel Friedrich I cancel all the birthday celebrations. Telegraph to all the Princes not to come." The Empress was present and said : " But William, you surely will not do that." The Emperor energetically pushed her aside and said : " I have to decide, not you." The efforts of Count Eulenburg to dissuade him from this sudden resolution were in vain. Everything was cancelled, and telegrams were sent to the Princes. It was very hard on the Prince of Bulgaria, who was in the middle of Hungary on his way from Sofia, and had to stop where he was.

On the next day, the 26th, it was already clear that the Emperor's decision had been over hasty, and he again issued his orders that the special Service and the Court should be held, and that the ceremonial changing of the Guard should be carried out in the customary way. He was not at all troubled by the idea that he had caused a good deal of inconvenience to all these royal personages ; indeed it never entered into his head to send them even a polite telegram, but when Count Eulenburg pointed this out he only said, " Do what you think best; you can put it all right." Nothing can be more characteristic of the Emperor than the suddenness of his whole decision and the facts that he would not allow the Empress to speak, and that Eulenburg could not move him. To show any consideration for the other royalties never occurred to him.

The condition of the Prince was all this time serious, but not dangerous. Her Majesty therefore moved to the Stadtschloss in Potsdam and went from there to the "Kabinetthaus" to nurse her son in person. The Emperor himself went over to Potsdam twice in the afternoon for a couple of hours, but only met Her Majesty in the open air and took little walks with her. He would not visit his sick son, so extraordinarily nervous is he in cases of inflammation of the lungs or pneumonia.

While the Emperor is generally cheerful and good-humoured, with passing fits of excitement and vehemence if anything displeases him, there are moments when he retires into his shell and becomes very frigid. It is true that his manner with his friends is generally frank and informal, and as owing to his position he can only know men and the world up to a certain point, some of them contrive to secure surprising advantages for themselves, if they are clever enough; or, like General von S. submissive enough—like Newfoundland dogs, which let themselves be kicked and cuffed, and still wag their tails. Sometimes, however, the Emperor is depressed by the loneliness of his autocratic position and the consciousness that his best friends only put up with such treatment because it is to their personal advantage. Then he becomes gloomy and keeps himself to himself. At such times he takes pleasure, even in the most extraordinarily serious circumstances, in making people believe the exact opposite of what he is really thinking and feeling.

Indeed he then takes a peculiar delight in hurting others, and this happens most often just when the victim thinks himself most secure in his favour. The more unexpected the blow, the greater his satisfaction

in seeing its effect. The only advice is caution, caution and again caution, in dealing with the Emperor, or you will have a poor time and some bitter experiences, unless you happen to have the Newfoundland temperament bred in the bone.

Taking it all round, the safe rule is to say to oneself: "The higher you climb with the Emperor, the lower will you fall later." The best recipe is judicious moderation. After all, in the life of every Court, it is always best to go on as if nothing had happened, when you are in slight disfavour, and fulfil all your duties most carefully in the smallest detail.

7th February 1905.

This morning I was at the unveiling of the Coligny Memorial in front of the Castle. The Emperor bestowed the Order of the Black Eagle on Count Görtz, who had designed the memorial. I expressed my surprise to His Excellency von Lucanus, the Chief of the Cabinet, and he said: "The Emperor knows less and less every day when to stop. There is no holding him, and now he has gone so far as to give his highest Order for a design for a monument!"

As a matter of principle, it would have been open to discussion whether this Order should have been offered to Count Görtz at all, since the house of which he is Chief derives direct from the Holy Roman Empire[1]; but in my opinion the Order is cheapened by being given at this particular moment. There will no doubt be many differences of opinion about the artistic value of the monument, but it should not be forgotten, after

[1] *Reichsunmittelbares Haus.*—These were houses which as early as the time of the Holy Roman Empire, and till the Napoleonic era, held their titles from no territorial authority but direct from the Empire.

all, that Count Görtz is only an amateur. Would it not have been possible, if the monument was wanted at any price, to give the commission to an artist? And would an artist have received the Order of the Black Eagle?

Yesterday at the opening of the Court Ball the engagement of the Prince of Coburg to Princess Alexandra of Schleswig-Holstein was announced. The bridal pair look very attractive and rather give the impression of two children. There is no doubt that the Duke has for some time been in love with the little Princess, but none the less he was rather serious after the engagement. The mother-in-law, however, was beaming, and the Empress was very happy. But the truth is that, to put it in good homely language, the little Duke has been caught.

10*th February* 1905.

Sometimes one cannot help thinking that the Empress Frederick was not wrong when she said at the time of her serious differences with her son: "Pray do not believe for a moment that my son ever does anything for any other reason but vanity." A calm observer can naturally see many others, but no doubt this motive of vanity is immensely important. The Emperor causes the greatest difficulties by his limitless egoism and the way in which he identifies himself so unreservedly with everything that happens round him, and with everything that concerns the Government and what it does.

On the occasion of the Crown Prince's meeting with the Duchess Cecilia in Florence the Grand Duchess Anastasia caused great perturbation because at the last moment she telegraphed that she would not come,

simply because she did not care to, and so it happened that the two young people were alone in Florence without the young lady's mother. A curious little interlude was that at the suggestion of Frau von Schulenburg, who was in attendance on her, the Duchess moved from the Grand Hôtel to the Hôtel de Ville, in which the Crown Prince was to stay. This increased the excitement here to the highest point, and, strange as it may seem, the two ladies were peremptorily ordered to return to the Grand Hôtel. We shall have some strange experiences in the future with the Grand Duchess, for here we have two different views of the world in opposition. But it would certainly have been more politic at the outset not to irritate these ladies so much without good reason.

23rd February 1905.

The Prince of Bulgaria left us yesterday. He showered Orders right and left, and I received my first Grand Cross and a ribbon. This is not so unimportant as it may seem, for in certain positions a ribbon is part and parcel of the uniform. Apart from this, it is fortunately a matter of complete indifference to a man of honour how many such Grand Crosses he may eventually pin on to his coat. The Prince was apparently very well satisfied with his stay, and had the amiability to praise everything.

He gives an impression of great shrewdness and seems to know what he wants. Once when he was talking about political plans for the future he said incidentally: "Yes, if I am still alive," and went on to say that there had been twenty-one conspiracies against his life. They say that he has never been too careful in the means he has chosen to protect his personal safety. He had

been invited here for the 8th February, after he had been compelled, like the Prince of the Asturias, to turn back on his first journey here. He requested to be allowed to postpone his arrival till the 9th. When the Foreign Office submitted this request to the Emperor he wrote with his own hand on the margin: "The visit on the 8th cannot be changed." The Foreign Office displayed a good deal of skill in inducing him to come on the 8th after all without giving him any cause for offence.

A few days ago the Duchess Friedrich Ferdinand of Holstein-Glücksburg, the Empress's sister, sat next to the Emperor at supper. Suddenly something went down the wrong way and she coughed. The Emperor smacked her very violently on the back and said: "That is the best cure." The Duchess got rather red and excited and could not help saying: "I should not like to have to take such a cure often."

The Emperor told us many quite comic stories about the wedding of the Grand Duke of Saxony in Bückeburg. On the evening before the wedding the Grand Duke suddenly appeared before him in service uniform and said: "I humbly beg to report to Your Majesty that I cannot marry to-morrow." The Kaiser got very excited and said: "When the German Emperor and the Queen of Holland come to your wedding, you simply cannot announce on the evening before the wedding that you won't marry." The Grand Duke nevertheless still tried to escape. He said his fiancee had treated him too badly and had insulted him too deeply, and it was quite impossible for him to do it. Then the Emperor said to him: "When you took your Army Oath you swore fealty and obedience to me, and I command you to marry to-morrow." This, he said,

was the only way of persuading the Grand Duke to marry on the next day after all.

The Emperor also told us in very graphic language how it had also fallen to his lot to persuade the Princess Reuss to become the Grand Duchess. Naturally enough, she, for her part, did not want to marry the Grand Duke, and the Kaiser had to use all his eloquence to persuade her. Princess Adolf von Schaumburg, the Empress's sister, was afraid until the last moment that the young Grand Duchess would suddenly disappear after the ceremony, and never start on the honeymoon. She said that, the son of a former Court Marshal of the bride's father, for whom she had a *penchant*, had been seen loitering in the neighbourhood of the Palace in the most suspicious way. On hearing this, the Emperor added, he had complied with the urgent request of Princess Adolf, and had consented to wait in the antechamber while the young Grand Duchess was changing her dress, and then took her arm and walked her about in the Palace until the carriage was before the door, and finally put her into it himself. When the Grand Duke and Duchess had driven off, Princess Adolf fell on his neck with tears in her eyes and thanked him for his loyal help.

For all who were in the secret it was only too clear why this marriage was so unhappy. After less than two years, inflammation of the lungs released the Grand Duchess from the marriage tie. These facts may explain the Empress's remark to Fräulein von Gersdorff: "It is perhaps much better that she should die like this." The Empress was thinking of some frivolities of the Grand Duchess which had come to her ears before the marriage, and, as I often noticed myself, she always treated her young kinswoman with particular coolness. Her

Majesty's views on such matters are rather extraordinarily strict, and even death cannot soften them. On the whole, I am not disposed to think that the Grand Duchess committed any serious indiscretion. We should be careful not to tell, or even drop hints in such a case.

27th February 1905.

To-day the new Cathedral was consecrated. The ceremonial had all the extraordinary splendour which is usual on such occasions at the German Court. But I felt that the whole service was neither elevating nor impressive. The two ecclesiastical dignitaries preached brilliant sermons, but the excessive byzantinism of their addresses offended me. Could they really believe a tithe of what they said so elequently? They went to incredible lengths in their panegyrics of the magnificent work and its creator—by whom they naturally meant the Emperor.

First of all, the site is badly chosen, for the enormous building is in far too small a space. The cupola is far too large for the substructure, and the absence of the double nave, which is usual in such a building, is a great fault and spoils the whole effect. Taken altogether, the whole is pretentious and challenges comparison with other large Cathedrals. How much more magnificent are the proportions of St. Peter's in Rome or the Cathedrals of Florence and Milan! How far more beautiful and restful are the interiors of those buildings! There is indeed plenty of variety here, and I can understand that while many details are worthy of admiration, others are open to objection. The whole is neither imposing, elevating, nor devotional.

In the afternoon the Emperor received the envoys of all countries, including the German Federal States,

who had been invited to the function, in the Black Eagle Chamber. The representatives of each country came in a body from the Knights' Hall and were presented to His Majesty by their Ambassadors or Ministers. Then they went through the red velvet chamber into the Chapter Room and were presented to Her Majesty.

As it was my business to see that each delegation entered the Black Eagle Hall from the Knights' Hall in due order, I was standing only a few steps from His Majesty, and could quite clearly hear the short addresses. The Emperor was full of fascinating amiability to all the representatives, especially to those who came from abroad. By the variety of his remarks and questions he showed himself, as he often does on such occasions, as a man of uncommon gifts perfectly developed by the best teachers for all practical purposes. Only one who knows him very well can read between the lines. The truth is, his head is so full of so many things that he loves to skim lightly over the surface of them all, and wishes neither to think deeply nor to do any real work. The exaggerations in his speeches—he is apt to go from one extreme to the other—the impulsiveness of his nature, his love of the unexpected, were obvious even here, and in spite of the advance of years, traces of the tactless "Potsdam Lieutenant" still showed through. Very probably no one among those who had been commanded to the audience noticed this. They did not know the Emperor well enough, and they had hardly time. Possibly some of them were too embarrassed. I am rather inclined to think that the personality of the Emperor, as was natural enough, made an extraordinary impression on all present.

As regards the addresses of the various representatives, they vied with each other in expressing admira-

tion of all the beautiful, uplifting, and magnificent things they had seen. They all lavished unstinted praise on the new Cathedral, and their eulogies were flavoured with excessive, but none the less carefully weighed, flattery of the person of the Emperor.

Strange thoughts cannot fail to come into the head of any man who for about an hour and a half has to be an impartial spectator of such a scene. First of all, it is comforting that this is not the only country where people say what they do not think, but that the representatives of other countries are at least our equals if not our superiors in this respect. But were all these excellent people really lying? There may be a few who are byzantines at heart and act as such, but the rest, I am sure, are merely passive, and half unconsciously influenced by the atmosphere of the Court. How ashamed some of them would be if in a quiet hour at home they could hear a gramophone repeating all the untruthful and insincere flatteries they had allowed themselves to utter! Sincerity, the one thing which in the long run brings great blessings, is what Germany chiefly needs.

2nd March 1905.

Some days ago I had a longish conversation with Count Hülsen-Haeseler,[1] the Chief of the Military Cabinet, on the many serious results of unchecked intrigue in the Army. The Count agrees that, especially in the training of the infantry in markmanship, envy and ambition have been developed to an extent which

[1] Dietrich Count von Hülsen-Häseler, Chief of the Military Cabinet, brother of Count Hülsen, the Intendant of Royal Theatres. He was said to have committed suicide after having been censured by the Emperor. The true story of his death in February 1909 is told by the author on p. 253.

must be called unfair competition, and must have the worst consequences. There are some regiments in which the ambition to shine as marksmen has been so far developed that any company which has any chance of becoming the best in the Army Corps is frequently relieved from all parades. Drill, sentry duty, and field duty are reduced to the absolute minimum, and at times their marching powers have been so neglected as to fall below the least exacting standard of military efficiency. It sometimes occurs that the cartridges which should have been served out to other companies are handed over to one only, in order that this one may have more practice and reach a particularly high standard. The fact that the proper training of the companies which give away their cartridges must suffer is bad enough, but the moral effect is still worse. It means that frauds are perpetrated more or less with the connivance of superior officers. Such abuses have come to light in more than one case where the Courts had to deal with charges of falsification of reports of target practice and records of competition results.

The number of officers against whom proceedings had to be taken for such offences is quite considerable. Nevertheless Count Hülsen-Haeseler admitted to me without further ado that in all probability only a very small percentage of such frauds was ever discovered. It is particularly significant that among the officers accused, the majority are just those who have been awarded particular distinctions and rapid promotion in recognition of the good shooting of the troops under their command. Count Hülsen-Haeseler said that the better one knew the facts the more appalling they seemed to be. He had consequently asked the Emperor to issue an Order calling the attention of superior officers to

these abuses, and instructing them to act energetically, and a Cabinet Order to this effect had been actually issued in the previous spring. I replied that I could not hope for any really good results from such an Order as long as the supreme authority could not make up its mind to attack such evils at the root. They would still remain. Their cause was simply and solely the unrestricted competition which had been introduced into the Army from above by the unjust treatment of all the officers the shooting of whose troops was below the average; such officers had sometimes even been dismissed. On the other side the ambition of the rest for exceptional results had been immeasurably stimulated by orders and promotions. There are too few men whose characters could resist such temptations, and nothing could be more demoralising to a young soldier than to offer him the choice between exceptional distinction and dismissal, which in other words means the jeopardising of his whole livelihood.

Here Count Hülsen-Haeseler agreed with me, but when I said to him straight out that it was imperatively necessary to put these things before the Emperor and to beg him to make an end of this system of rewards and punishments, he nervously and apprehensively shook his head. That, he said, was impossible. This struck me particularly because only a few days before he had said emphatically: "It is quite incorrect to say that nothing can be told the Emperor. If only one tackles him in the right way, one can, on the contrary, say everything to him, and he will always listen."

This inconsistency is very curious, but very characteristic. With regard to many things what Count Hülsen-Haeseler says is quite true; there are others which he himself can unfortunately not venture even to

touch on in the presence of the Emperor, and it is just the most essential, serious and important questions which most often fall into the second category.

The Crown Prince returned from Florence some days ago as the Grand Duchess said the state of her health made a journey to Florence impossible. The Emperor thought it was not proper for the engaged couple to be there any longer, and sent a telegram to the Crown Prince ordering him to return. He came at once. The whole incident caused a heated and not altogether friendly interchange of telegrams between the Grand Duchess and her son the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg. A little caution at the beginning would have avoided the necessity for such hasty and drastic decisions.

The little Duke of Saxe-Coburg had a bad time the other evening in the library. The Emperor loves to make him the butt of his jokes. The end of it is generally that he pinches and smacks him so hard that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the little Duke gets a good beating. The other day his fiancée, Princess Victoria, and her parents were present. This made it particularly painful for the Duke, who had much ado to prevent himself from bursting into tears, and the whole evening he looked as unhappy as a man who expects to be hanged the next day. That this is the way to make him a particularly loyal head of a German Federal State is at least doubtful. He will be twenty-one in the course of this year, and will officially become the ruler of his country.

7th March 1905.

The bestowal of distinctions on the conclusion of the negotiations for treaties of commerce followed closely on the decorating of Count Görtz with the Order of the

Black Eagle. The story goes, with regard to the earlier incident,[1] that one of the ladies who moves in the highest circles said, after inspecting the Coligny monument: "It seems to me that the Red Eagle Order of the Fourth Class would have been too much: the Universal Distinction would have been the proper thing." On the other hand no fair-minded person will grudge Count Posadowsky[2] the distinction which has been given him. He is certainly one of the most industrious and deserving of our Ministers. Here at last we have a case in which the larger public will understand that he gains a real distinction by the bestowal of this Order. But is it wise to choose just this particular occasion? Is it diplomatic to act as if we were so immeasurably cleverer than everybody else, and had gained such astonishing advantages over the whole world just after these endless negotiations with every foreign country, and especially after difficulties with our friend and ally, Austria?

Will not such constant glorification of our own merits, whenever the State moves a finger, end by arousing the suspicions of the people at large? Any really good law and any really good commercial treaty, even any moderately sound piece of work must, in the long run, speak for itself. Why this importunate, parvenu-like insistence on our own achievements? Is it the fact that things are not really as promising as they seem? It is almost inevitable that the public should have its suspicions. Is it then after all from the moral point of view necessary to distribute such extraordinary public rewards for the simple and faithful execution of duty? Do not such things educate the people to

[1] See p. 122.

[2] *Count Posadowsky.*—Secretary of State of the Interior.

insincerity and intrigue? Proofs of the obvious vices of such a system of extraordinary rewards can be multiplied to infinity.

The Emperor's motives for bestowing these distinctions are to be found in his impulsive nature, and in a certain good-humoured wish to give others pleasure. No conscientious observer, who knows his personality well, should leave this out of account in trying to give a dispassionate picture of him. There is no doubt however, that his vanity is at the bottom of everything. The Emperor insists that everything shall depend on his gracious favour; that everything shall be his doing and his alone, and that everybody shall be deeply interested in his person, speak about him all day long, and always admire him. There is a popular saying about these many decorations: "We cannot give everybody a chicken for his pot every Sunday, but we will see to it that everyone of our subjects has an order in his button-hole."

Imperial Train, Wilhelmshaven, 9th March 1905.

After the Carnival Ball on the 7th March His Majesty left Berlin at a quarter past one in the morning. Next morning he arrived at Oldenburg at 8.50. The Grand Duke received the Emperor at the railway station. This short visit, which takes place every year in the same sort of way, was the excuse for a breakfast in the Grand Ducal Castle at nine o'clock. It had quite the character of a regular dinner, even goose liver was not absent from the menu; and champagne and other choice wines flowed freely, as if it were already eight o'clock in the evening. At 10.35 His Majesty's train left for Wilhelmshaven.

On the way the Emperor talked a good deal about home politics. He dwells on the point that the rejection of the Military Estimates by the Centre and the Social Democrats has cleared the situation as regards the Centre. This party, he said, was needed for the vote about the Canal, as well as for carrying through the Treaties of Commerce, but now the support of the Centre was no longer wanted. On the contrary their excessive demands must in future be resisted. As regards the Military Estimates the Government must allow no haggling, and consent to no reduction. He had expressly commanded the Minister of War to have nothing to do with any suggestion for the curtailment of the Estimates, and they were agreed on the subject. But if the Government could not get on without the Centre, there must be no concession now, and Parliament must be dissolved. He added that the Chancellor was of the same opinion and in perfect agreement with him.

I find it very significant that the Emperor should lay such stress on his being of one mind with the Chancellor and the Minister of War. There was no doubt that at the moment he spoke from the bottom of his heart, and he was not talking for the benefit of people at large, so to speak, from the house-tops, but in the most intimate way and in part almost soliloquising. Beside myself only General von Plessen and Admiral von Senden were with him.

At 11.50 we reached Wilhelmshaven. The swearing-in of the sailors of the Second Naval Division took place as usual in the Drill Hall. First of all the Evangelical minister spoke and then the Catholic priest. After a chorale had been sung, His Majesty addressed the men, and this was followed by a vote of thanks and three cheers for the Supreme War Lord.

The Emperor's speech was adorned with even more orthodox religious sentiments than we have grown accustomed to. I believe in his heart of hearts, he is full of the idea, which he has often emphasised on such occasions, that it is only a good Christian that can be a good soldier. In any case we heard a good deal, both in the speech of the Emperor and in the addresses of the two clergymen, about the war between Japan and Russia. Quite apart from the fact that such allusions seem somewhat far-fetched, they were impolitic, because there is no getting away from the fact that in the Far East the Christians have constantly been beaten by the non-Christian forces. It will probably be impossible ever to give adequate praise to the Japanese, but it will not be pleasant for Russia that her misfortunes should be made the subject of official eloquence in this way. After lunch at the Casino the Emperor embarked at about half-past three on the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.*

Here there was a large dinner at eight o'clock at night, after which His Majesty again gave an address to the assembled company on the military position in the Far East. The lucidity of his comments on the situation was admirable, and one could not help admiring his power of concentration. It was a pity that in the discussion which followed, Admirals von Köster, von Tirpitz, and von Bendemann, eminent as they are, only dared to suggest the very slightest differences of opinion. This time, too, there was no question of a real discussion or exchange of opinions in any true sense of the words.

The stay in Wilhelmshaven was followed by a cruise on the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* to Bremerhaven; and from there we travelled via Bremen, where the Rathskeller was visited, back to Berlin.

Frequent meetings with naval men always impress

me with the good effects of this calling on the average officer. Their outlook is broad; their profession fosters inner development. The variety, the seriousness and the responsibility of their duties stimulate intelligence, energy, and independence, arouse intellectual interests and remove many prejudices. The absence of social barriers inside the Navy has its distinct advantages as compared with the Army, in which the noble and the *bourgeois*, the rich and the poor officer despise and distrust each other. Here the well-to-do officer is taught consideration for his less wealthy comrade, and the poorer man learns that it is no shame to be poor, and that he must accustom himself to move without embarrassment among those who are more fortunate. The young officers from families which are at home most exclusive, here come into close contact with elements from other circles. Each learns how to understand the other, and realises that it was often only ignorance and prejudice which kept them apart in the past. It must be an advantage to the whole State that many should learn such lessons from the more vigorous activities, the different views of life, or the better upbringing of other classes.

22nd March 1905.

Last night the Court Theatre was opened after rebuilding by a performance in the presence of the Court and specially invited guests. The piece was "The Prince of Homburg." The Emperor had already attended the full rehearsal on the previous evening, and a few days before he had heard the actors read their parts. It is characteristic that he should be so interested in this piece, which is in itself quite good, but

does not express the spirit of the times. But in many respects he lives in a mental atmosphere of his own, where nothing can influence him, and this is another reason why he cannot really feel the public pulse. And then he is only too eager to seize every opportunity to glorify the Hohenzollerns; and from this ancestor worship he promises himself results that we are not likely to see.

No blame can be too severe for those who exploit his views only for their own benefit, flatter him and egg him on only to deceive and hoodwink him later. Such insincerity, if it develops further, may well one day be fatal to us, and produce conditions such as we see in Russia to-day. Nothing can save us except the healthy progress of the people through honest, peaceful work. The problem will be, which of the two forces will ultimately prove the stronger. The most significant sign of the times is the striving in every sphere—be it religion, politics, art, or practical life—after simplicity, truth, and naturalness. Though it may cause many errors and excesses, and lead us into tortuous ways, in the end it may yet save us, and raise us to a higher level of civilisation.

End of March 1905.

At the opening of the Theatre I was painfully affected by the endless gush I had to listen to about the magnificence of the building. The recollection of it still depresses me. There may be a few whose judgment is so poor that they are impressed by details because they are new and blatant, but the majority merely simulate admiration because the Emperor not only likes it, but to a certain extent demands it. The fact is that he

wishes the Royal Theatre in Berlin to be a model for the other Theatres in the capital. This is a lofty ideal, but it is not too much to ask, if we remember what an enormous advantage the subsidized playhouse enjoys in comparison with all others in having no expenses to meet for ground rent or building, and receiving millions of marks from the Treasury.

One of the results of the rebuilding is that the Theatre can now seat about two hundred fewer than before, and its character is now that of a charming and intimate Court Theatre in a Royal Palace. It would be very suitable for the Trianon, perhaps even for the New Palace for occasional performances by amateurs, or a company engaged for a smaller celebration. But the Royal Theatre should be the home of dramatic art in the grand manner, and for this it is absolutely unsuitable. And the details! When a Royal Theatre is built with such unlimited resources at its command, one would expect to see something really artistic, but genuine taste is absolutely lacking. Among all the numberless reliefs, portraits, frescoes, there is not one which satisfies even the lowest artistic standard. At a certain distance everything is neat and pretty, but if we look at it closely, it is all inadequate and superficial.

The actors themselves are beneath contempt. It is incredible how much better the acting is in the New Theatre, the Lessing Theatre, and the Little Theatre, as anybody who sees good pieces played there will admit. Yet the Royal Theatre has command of boundless money, and the members of the company enjoy the right to a pension and orders and decorations from the All Highest and the other German sovereigns.

One cannot help asking oneself how this is possible. One of the main causes of the mischief is that Herr

von Hülsen[1] starts from the principle: "How does my All Highest master like it? How can I flatter his taste? What is the most diplomatic thing to do and what will pay me best?" Such questions as, "How can I serve art? What am I here to do? What is my duty to the public?" unfortunately never enter his head. Another evil is the rigidity of the discipline. It is not too much to say that Herr von Hülsen has carried it to such excess that one would think his artists were a batch of recruits. You cannot train independent actors who will live for the interests of art, if you treat them like automata. You will never get anything but mediocrity. The costumes, the historical erudition, and the drill and precision of the performance—in short, all that has to do with training—are first rate, and that is all.

Is not this gala performance in the Royal Theatre completely symbolical of all our affairs? I am afraid it is, but fortunately the people as a whole are not so easily and dangerously affected as we might expect. We may, however, some day have a sudden tragic awakening, as we had at Jena—but then, there could not have been a Jena without a Napoleon.

A few days ago the House of Representatives voted Prince Friedrich Ferdinand of Schleswig-Holstein-Glücksburg £7500 quarterly, in satisfaction of his claims. There was no reason for giving him any compensation. He did not waive any claims, because he had none to waive. Such a thing should be impossible. The only justification Ministers could plead for this demand was that the House of Glücksburg had a very

[1] *Count von Hülsen.* Intendant of the Royal Theatres till 1918. Before taking office in Berlin he had held a similar post in Wiesbaden. Died in 1922.

considerable subsidy from Denmark up to the war of 1864. For full forty years no one in Prussia dared to mention any such claim or to support it. With equally good reason every peasant in Holstein who thought he had suffered from Prussia's acquisition of the Duchy, could put up the same demand on the same grounds. How can such things be? Ministers—fortunately not all, but too many—are not only submissive; they are so servile that, without caring a jot for the good of the State, they only think of gaining their own ends by flattery and of gratifying imperial whims in a way which may profit them at Court. Here is another proof that it is not the excesses of the lower orders, but the follies of the upper classes themselves which are the greatest danger to the common weal.

A few days ago the Emperor spoke to some friends of his fight against the Union Club and gambling.[1] He described in a very lively way the difficulties he had in this respect, when he was still Prince William, and how energetically he had to proceed at the beginning of his reign. He went so far as to assert that if he had not taken such drastic steps, the corruption here would be at least as bad as it is in St. Petersburg society. The lively imagination of the Emperor certainly gives him the strangest ideas on such subjects, and his ignorance of the world and men makes them stranger still. The essential point is that the Emperor draws quite wrong conclusions from his apparent success.

He believes that the chief grounds for the collapse of Russia are to be found in its corruption. He does not seem to remember other important factors which contribute largely. Japan has her fair share of corruption, and still has been successful. How can he

[1] See also p. 191.

reconcile the enormous progress made in America with the corruption which undoubtedly exists there? What of England? Here in Germany no one will admit that there is any such thing. Everyone believes that everything is for the best, which is the most dangerous form of Pharisaism. Was there no corruption in the time of Caesar, of the Great Elizabeth, Frederick the Great, and Napoleon I.? No good can come from such self-deception.

7th April 1905.

On the morning of the 22nd of March the Emperor left Berlin on his journey to the Mediterranean. He first of all went via Bremen, where he unveiled a monument to the Emperor Frederick, to Cuxhaven, where he embarked on the steamer *Hamburg*, of the Hamburg-America Line which reached Lisbon on the 27th of March. He left on the 30th at noon. The following day he was in Tangier, the same evening in Gibraltar, the 3rd April at Port Mahon, the 5th at Naples, and on the 7th left Naples for Messina and Taormina. As I have to relieve Count Eulenburg at Palermo on the 15th, I am leaving for that place this evening.

The Emperor's stay in Tangier has let loose a great Press campaign in every country, but especially in England and France. In France excitement ran so high that it almost looked as if the position of Delcassé, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, was in danger. In German official circles and newspapers every effort was made to make the world believe that the visit to Tangier was the result of a completely thought-out diplomatic scheme, and that it was necessary in German interests that the Emperor should emphasise the policy of the Open Door during his stay in Morocco.

As a matter of fact the way in which this incident, the importance of which was so greatly exaggerated, occurred was as follows. When the Emperor was discussing the plans for his cruise in the Mediterranean he said to Count Eulenburg that he would be glad to have a look at Morocco and would like to see the coast near Tangier.

Accordingly Count Eulenburg cautiously asked the Chancellor, Count Bülow, whether such a cruise to Tangier might not be inadvisable on political grounds. I myself saw Count Bülow's written answer which ran: "If he confines himself to cruising close inshore past Tangier, it can do no harm." It was obvious from this that he did not really approve of the Emperor's plan but was trying gently to dissuade him from it.

A few days later the Emperor spoke of his possible landing in Tangier quite as a matter of course, and Count Bülow had not the courage to declare that this might produce difficulties in the political situation. It was quite obvious that the idea was eminently unpalatable to the Chancellor but that he did not venture to say so frankly as he ought to have done. This is how his stay at Tangier originated, and now everybody is trying to say that it had been carefully planned and was undertaken in the interest of Germany. History is too often made in this way.

The only triumphant success of the visit is that it has caused great excitement in France and that she has been driven into the arms of England which is, at the moment, the worst thing that could have happened for us. France's retort was the meeting of the President with the King of England and the plan of a Franco-British naval demonstration this summer. It was a political blunder on our part thus to trumpet forth our advocacy of the Open Door, because France is so

strongly placed in regard to Morocco, that she is perfectly well able to close this Open Door any day on her own initiative. But it is clearly inconceivable that we should go to war with France—still less with France and England together—for the sake of this doctrine. If both Powers take the matter seriously we shall have to climb down. This little diplomatic affair, which will, in spite of momentary excitement, in all probability end in smoke, is likely to leave a certain feeling of uneasiness among our English and, still more, our French neighbours, and in this sense it may well have a lasting effect, much like that of the ill-considered Krüger despatch. Be this as it may, the whole development of this business is one of those things, which may one day be really dangerous to Germany.

Curiously enough there appeared in a recent number of *Kladderadatsch* a set of verses about the visit to Tangier, and the excitement which followed, of which the last one runs as follows :—

"Pray tell us what it all may mean,
Tell us, relieve the world's anxiety."
—"Tangier 's a place I 've never seen,
And so I 'll go, just for variety." [1]

This is probably the best explanation of the whole political problem and the nearest the truth.

31st July 1905.

For the past few months everything has been going on as usual. Social life at Court has been exceptionally

[1] Wer wird diese Frage lösen ?
So ertönt es bang und banger :
"Wir sind noch nicht in Tanger gewesen
Drum reisen wir nach Tanger."

brilliant. There were four Court Balls and a Festival of the Royal Stables. Then came the Italian cruise, during which I went on duty at Taormina, and remained in attendance until the return of the Kaiser. Then in the beginning of July came the wedding of the Crown Prince, which was very brilliant and happy. The summer programme, with its visit to Kiel and the cruise that followed, was the same as usual. For political reasons there was a cruise in the North Sea this year instead of to Scandinavia.

The varied phases of the Morocco question, which caused so much stir, have been very singular. At first it was a sudden inspiration of the Emperor to pass through the Straits of Gibraltar after the Mediterranean cruise in order to have a view of the African Coast, and he wanted to have a little change, and did not wish to prolong his stay in Gibraltar as he did last year. This seemed so important to Count Eulenburg that he thought it wisest to get the opinion of the Chancellor, who decided that there was no harm in just cruising along the African coast. He gave the Emperor "a little finger."[1] A few days later the idea had developed in the imagination of the Emperor, who now spoke of anchoring off Tangier and landing, and then at this point the Chancellor's courage failed him. He did not dare to point out that this might necessitate political "explanations." He said, as he often has done in such cases, "Certainly," and agreed to everything.

When the Emperor's intentions were made public, there was a tremendous storm in the newspapers of every shade of opinion, especially in England and France. Then the Emperor wavered. From the moment that he left Lisbon it was never certain whether he would

[1] *i.e.*, he 'gave him an inch,' and he took an ell.

really land or not, but his advisers rightly thought that to give up the project at the last moment would argue weakness, and at the eleventh hour, they succeeded finally, and not without some trouble, in persuading him to visit Tangier. When he was once ashore, the Emperor was full of enthusiasm and immediately made an impulsive speech, which later caused the spilling of so much ink.

We then noticed the French were displaying more caution than we had anticipated, and so we used the situation, since their ally Russia was fully occupied both in the Far East and at home, to humiliate Delcassé and drive him out of office.

No doubt this was a momentary success, but in the long run I hardly believe that much good will come of it. The attention of France and England has been quite unnecessarily called to the fact that Germany's inclination is to imperil the balance of power in Europe, which has been changed by the fate of Russia. France will now become more cautious, and, for the rest, will only lean more strongly on England, and in combination with her work all the harder in the common interest to counteract the evergrowing superiority of Germany.

Meanwhile Germany herself is now in danger of being tempted to further adventures in world politics by this trifling, and after all, only apparent, success in Morocco. Our only hope is that the Emperor will preserve a judicial calm and be saved from ill-considered and impulsive decisions. Still the general political situation is so favourable for us that our prospects are extraordinarily good, if we can only keep our heads. Even England will not be directly dangerous to us as long as we ourselves commit no grave blunders.

It interested me to notice, on the Italian journey, how

enthusiastic the Emperor grew about Kaiser Friedrich II., the Hohenstaufen.[1] For days he hardly talked of anything else, and from Bari he made an excursion to the various places connected with his memory. While he was looking over Castel del Monte, about fifty kilometres from Bari, which is still perfectly preserved, he said: "It is wonderful to think what this great Emperor achieved. If I were able to have people beheaded as easily as he could, I could do more."

In his admiration for this Hohenstaufen the Emperor approves of two things, which as a rule he condemns unsparingly. At one time Friedrich II., who certainly was a ruler of magnificent gifts, fell so under the sway of oriental ideas that he instituted a harem; secondly, he was so irreverent that he once said: "There are three great impostors in the world—the first was Moses, the second was Christ, and the last Mahomet." How can the Kaiser reconcile this admiration with his habitual rigidly Christian ideas of morality?

9th October 1905.

The Emperor's irritation against the King of England is more deep seated than I thought. The letter which Edward VII. allowed to be written by his secretary and published, in which he said that he had had no intention whatever of meeting the Emperor, has wounded him deeply; and he seriously resented the King's not stopping at Homburg after his cure in Marienbad. I am afraid that he will, every now and then, give expression to his annoyance, when everyone will get to know of it, and the result will be still more strained relations.

[1] Emperor, 1220-1250.

There is no doubt that what the Emperor really hopes for at the present moment is the possibility of a friendship with Russia and France so close that it may soon develop into a kind of an alliance, which would be a counter-weight to the British treaty with Japan.

Among those who were in attendance at Rominten was Major von Neumann-Cosel who was appointed *aide-de-camp* about six months ago. All the other gentlemen in the *entourage* of the Kaiser have without exception abilities, knowledge, and qualities of character beyond the average. Neumann, however, is very far from being up to this standard. His nomination at the last Spring Parade came as a bolt from the blue upon his superiors in the Military Cabinet and upon his friends. He is a frightened little man with the most narrow-minded and petty outlook on life, but has a curiously irrepressible desire to kiss the Emperor's hand on every possible occasion. He did it once before, when he was an officer of the Second Regiment of the Guards, which called the Emperor's attention to him. He has had several hints that this way of kissing hands several times in the day is not quite the proper thing, and it might even be called oriental, but he replied quite naïvely that, as he had once begun it, he could not stop.

Even Prince Dohna, who is in Rominten every year, and is himself very byzantine, finds this habit of the A.D.C. kissing the Emperor's hand quite unseemly. He himself goes far enough, for he never appears before the Emperor, whenever he has anything to tell him, without rushing into his presence breathless, to show his zeal. He has also ordered all his foresters to kiss His Majesty's hand. Once he carried his servility so far that he asked the Emperor whether his cows in

Schlobitten could be graciously permitted to wear the same bells as the imperial kine in Rominten. He had to swallow His Majesty's answer: "I don't care two-pence what bells your silly beasts [1] wear."

On the 30th September the news was suddenly brought to Rominten that an elk had been sighted. The Emperor immediately had every carriage in the place brought round, and everybody drove off. Even the Empress and the young Princess accompanied us, because they were told it was quite near and all would soon be over. The Emperor took his place in a hut on a meadow through which the river runs. The beaters scoured the thickets, and the Empress and the Princess and the other ladies and gentlemen were grouped at intervals of two or three hundred metres round them to act as scarecrows. . . .[2]

It was a showery day; everybody was standing about for an hour, then two hours, and finally three hours. The Empress had just returned from riding, and before starting out on the drive had eaten nothing, and was wet through, but still she waited and would not go away and did not even like to ask whether it would soon come to an end, although hunger, cold, and wet must have caused her acute discomfort. At last it was decided that the gentlemen too should beat the thickets. Count Schmettow, Major von Neumann and I came out into the meadow just opposite the Emperor, and suddenly we saw the river before us. The Emperor very categorically gave the word of command: "Through

[1] An untranslatable joke. 'Rindvieh' means 'Cattle' and is also a term of abuse.

[2] This cannot be translated literally. At an elk-shooting in Germany the woods are beaten in the ordinary way but, in addition, patches of bright coloured cloth are hung from trees and bushes. It was in substitution for these that the Court officials were called upon to act.

the river, through the Rominte."[1] As a matter of fact we had to do it, and naturally got wet through and through in the ice-cold water. Immediately after this we went home. When we arrived at the shooting-box, the Emperor called out to me: "The gentlemen are to come to dinner at once without changing." I passed on this order to all the gentlemen in attendance, but quickly put on dry stockings and boots, and the others did the same; except Major von Neumann who took the order literally, and remained for an hour and a half in his wet boots. Strangely enough, his excessive zeal caused him nothing more than a very severe cold, which he did not get rid of all the time he was at Rominten. In my opinion he was let off very easily.

10*th October* 1905.

From Rominten we went via Königsberg-Pillau to Glücksburg to the wedding of the Duke of Coburg. Yesterday the Emperor told us that he had requested Lascelles, the English Ambassador, to ask the King of England whether he wished to pick a quarrel, or why else he had travelled through Germany without taking any notice of him. Lascelles had been instructed by the King of England to answer: "The King is annoyed because the Emperor is always spreading gossip about him all over Europe, and therefore felt he could not visit him." This reminds me that not long ago Count Eulenburg said to Sir F. Lascelles: "There was a time when you were always so agreeable and cordial to us, but now you seem to be just the opposite." The British Ambassador answered with a friendly smile: "If I had told London everything that your All Highest

[1] The river running through Rominten.

master has said, we should have had war between England and Germany at least twenty times."

When the *Hohenzollern* arrived this morning, the Duke Friedrich Ferdinand and the Duke of Coburg came to see His Majesty. After a few minutes the Emperor began to talk with the gentlemen about his relations with England, and made no secret of his irritation, especially against the King. As several of the English Princes and Princesses are to be present at the wedding, we may expect that the King of England will get to hear a good many things which will not exactly tend to make him better disposed towards us.

CHAPTER VIII

IMPERIAL INDISCRETIONS

February 1906.

ON the day before we left for Copenhagen[1] His Majesty invited his Ministers to supper. This sort of meeting between Ministers and their Sovereign is something of a curiosity nowadays. When the Emperor entered the Pillar Hall (which is the usual place of assembly when there are less than forty at table), the Ministers ranged themselves opposite to the Emperor in a semicircle, all adopting a quasi-military bearing. After a few words of welcome, the Emperor spoke to each of them more or less playfully, punctuating his remarks by questions, to which the answer was invariably given in almost military fashion. On such an occasion one is inevitably reminded of a commander of a regiment conversing with his officers.

After dinner Podbielski told some coarse and *risqué* stories which would have been more in keeping with a "tobacco-parliament."[2] When a particularly coarse story had made everybody hold his sides with laughter, the Emperor would give him a smack on the back, which made me think that he would be black and blue for a fortnight. And I remembered the poor Gundling,[3] who sometimes had to suffer for his jokes.

[1] For the funeral of King Christian IX., died Jan. 29.

[2] Tabaks-Collegium: a student's meeting for smoke and talk.

[3] Freiherr von Gundling was Court historian to Frederick William I., the father of Frederick the Great. He was, as a matter of fact, a kind of Court Fool. He died in 1731, and was buried in a wine cask.

A great deal was said to von Bethmann[1] about bad roads, the Emperor declaring he did not do enough for motorists. Every road should be two metres broader, which would prevent all accidents. Von Bethmann tried to answer very quietly and make the Emperor realise the facts of the situation. Much as His Majesty might wish for broader roads, he said, we must be glad that with the means at our disposal we are able to finish those which are most urgently necessary. His remarks were not well received, and he was interrupted time after time by the Emperor, before he could finish what he had to say. Anyhow Herr von Bethmann was the only one of the Ministers, who at this evening's entertainment gave me the impression of particular ability, seriousness and knowledge, and always succeeded in preserving his ministerial dignity.

The next morning, on the 15th inst., we left Berlin. We started at half-past nine from the Lehrter Station; we immediately sat down to breakfast, with courses of hot fish and meat, tea, coffee, and pastry. The Emperor is very fond of this, his first meal in the day for which he has the best appetite. I sat opposite him and now and again took part in the conversation, and he suddenly said to me that quite recently, on the day of the Ambassadors' dinner, he had been poisoned. There must have been something in the food, for none of the usual remedies had done him any good, and the Doctors had admitted that it might have been poison. As he had said the same sort of thing several times before, I did not take it very seriously and suggested that this indisposition might have come from a cold. He would

[1] Afterwards von Bethmann-Hollweg. At this time minister of the Interior. Became Chancellor in 1909.

not hear of such a thing, and said: "It is quite likely that I have verdigris in all my kettles." Naturally, I attempted a little later on to get even with the Doctors, and told them they had no right to saddle us with such absolutely groundless suspicions. But as Doctor Niedtner and Doctor Ilberg both assured me they had said nothing, I could do no more.

With this exception the Emperor was—as he is generally, when he is leaving home—in the best of tempers, and I was treated most amiably. From 9.30 to 12.30 we sat in the dining-car. Except that Admiral von Senden gave a quite interesting report, we only talked informally and smoked. At 12.30 the Emperor withdrew to his own Saloon, and when I asked him when he wanted dinner, he said 1.30. From that hour, till we arrived at 3 o'clock we sat together as we had done at breakfast.

In Kiel the Emperor inspected the Germania Dock and the Imperial Dock, and then took up his quarters in the *Preussen* together with Plessen, Moltke, Senden, Müller and Dr. Niedtner. I myself, as I usually do on these occasions, slept at the Royal Palace. In the evening Prince and Princess Henry gave a large dinner. Prince Henry, from time to time, holds very animated conversations with me, but I sometimes feel a little nervous about them, because although I agree with him on many points, it is a little awkward when he touches on subjects on which he is in disagreement with his imperial brother.

As is the case with most conversations at Court, no positive good can be done, but it is quite easy to land oneself in trouble.

On the 16th at 11 o'clock in the morning I went by the ordinary steamer to Korsör, and from there to

Copenhagen, where we arrived at 6.45 in the evening. When one travels officially, as Controller of the Household of the Emperor, one is very well treated. I was formally welcomed by the Captain and was given a private cabin although my ticket did not entitle me to any such thing. In Korsör I was personally received by the German Consul, who saw that I had no difficulties with the Customs, and a first-class compartment was reserved for me for the journey to Copenhagen.

Count Hülsen-Haeseler, the Chief of the Emperor's Cabinet, von Valentini, von Neumann-Cosel, the second Equerry, and I were the guests of the Danish Court at the Hotel Bristol. These gentlemen had come direct via Warnemünde. The place was already thick with Ambassadors, foreign Royalties, and deputations of officers. We were all free to order what we liked, and everything was put down to the Court, and though we had come to a funeral, after some of our sittings over the champagne the place looked rather as if the occasion were a festive one. In fact, not a few of the gentlemen spent every night up to two or three o'clock over wine and still more wine, and on the last night after the funeral I was assured that they had stayed up till five.

At three o'clock in the afternoon of the 17th His Majesty arrived at Copenhagen on board the *Preussen*. We had to spend about two hours in the wet and driving snow in our full dress uniforms. About half an hour after his arrival the King of Denmark and other royal persons present paid their visits, with the exception of the Duke of Cumberland, who naturally did not come; but he made up for it afterwards, when the Emperor and the Duke met at a family dinner. In the evening

there was a large dinner of Court officials in the Castle of Amalienborg, at which curiously enough the Crown Prince presided.

At the right of the Crown Prince was the Controller of the Household, Count von Auer, the representative of the Duke of Anhalt, and on his left the representative of America. The only explanation of this ridiculous arrangement must be that the idea was to arrange the seats according to alphabetical order, but it had been overlooked that "Am" comes before "An." The Controller of the Household, Count von Auer, apparently had his head a little turned by his exalted place, and it so happened that, when on the last evening the senior Danish officer gave a farewell address to the guests, he promptly rose and expressed the thanks of all present. Immediately after this His Excellency, Herr von Carlowitz got up and said: "Herr von Auer, permit me to thank you for having made this speech on my behalf."

On the morning of the 18th there was Divine Service on board the *Hohenzollern*, and at a quarter to one the train left for Roskilde, the former capital, about thirty kilometres from Copenhagen. At two o'clock there was a service in the Cathedral. I thought it was very solemn and dignified, but rather long. Somebody asked the Emperor to-day whether he understood what the preacher had said to the effect that the King had been robbed of the larger part of his country, and particularly that part in which he was born. The Emperor, however, understood not a word of the sermon and so had not noticed this tactless remark. . . .

On the 19th I returned via Korsör. I had a compartment and cabin reserved for me again, and the Consul

of Korsör greeted me again. I had a long talk with the Archduke Leopold Salvator, and the impression that he made was that of a very amiable and capable gentleman.

His Majesty arrived here to-day on board the *Preussen*. I went on board to make the necessary arrangements for the return journey to-night. There were also one or two other questions which I had to ask, especially whether Princess Henry would represent the Empress, who was still indisposed, at the Court Ball in Berlin on the following day.

The Emperor had already gone to the wharf, but returned immediately after one o'clock. He at once said to me: "What are you doing here? I have not invited you. You are supposed to feed on shore." I did not however take this remark very seriously, and remained to breakfast. As nothing else happened, I concluded that I had done nothing wrong and appeared at dinner again at 8 o'clock.

On days like this, before a journey, I must be present, as it so commonly happens that something is altered in the arrangements, and the inconvenience is more serious if I am not on the spot. It was very curious with what difficulty General von Moltke managed to get the Emperor's permission to start for home to-day on the ground that he had so much to do in Berlin. The Emperor can never admit that anyone can have anything important to do anywhere away from himself, even if he is Chief of the General Staff.

* * *

It is a supreme piece of good luck that nothing untoward happened at the demonstrations in Berlin

on the 21st January. Drastic and violent measures are very inconsistent with the necessity that may arise in an hour of danger for a "National Appeal," calling on the People to disregard their own sacrifices and rally to the support of the country. There was only one view, which was shared also by General von Hahnke, about the military arrangements in the Palace on the 21st January. Everybody thought them excessive, but no one dared to say so, at least not emphatically.

13th March 1906.

On Sunday, the 11th March, we left Berlin for Wilhelmshaven. There had been a dinner in the Palace in honour of the birthday of the Prince Regent. The members of the Bavarian Embassy, the Federal Consul, and any superior Bavarian officers, who happened to be in Berlin, had been invited, and there were thirty-five guests altogether. After dinner there was a musical entertainment by Sven Scholander, a Swedish artist, who sings songs to the accompaniment of the lute. As, curiously enough, the Emperor is very much interested in him, he sings once a year before invited guests. These songs scarcely fit in with our strict ideas of propriety at Court, and in my humble judgment, they are, both in regard to contents and artistry of interpretation, on a level no higher than French cabaret songs. This is the opinion of the Empress and her ladies, and they do not conceal their virtuous indignation. Even the men were somewhat astonished. The songs were quite amusing and pretty, and would have pleased a not too exacting male audience but a rather formal banquet of this kind is not the proper place for them.

I escorted the Emperor to his saloon; but as I had expected, he went straight to the dining-car, to which, in consequence, the gentlemen of the suite betook themselves. They were Admiral von Senden, Generals von Kessel and von Scholl, Admiral von Müller, Major von Neumann-Cosel, Dr. Ilberg, and myself. When we were all assembled we stood about repeating the latest jokes. On these occasions the greatest liberty is allowed, and it was curious to see how even the most polished courtiers could hardly wait for their turn to tell their favourite story. This can only be explained by the byzantinism which will account to the historian of the future for everything in the present day history of Germany, which seems inexplicable to outsiders. In his anxiety not to be behindhand everybody forgot all restraint and rattled off the first thing that came into his head. There were, however, some cases of disappointment, where somebody with even greater zeal had already told His Majesty the latest tale.

The Emperor himself asked his suite the following riddle: "What is the difference between a mother-in-law and a good Havana cigar?" Naturally nobody knew the answer, and he said: "In the case of a good cigar we prefer the first breath we draw, but in the case of a mother-in-law it is the last breath she draws that we like best."[1] We all loyally burst into hysterics on hearing this new jest, which, if not very delicate, was at least not so bad as some. The Emperor told us that it had been telegraphed to him from London by —— a former British Military Attaché. The Emperor often

[1] An almost untranslatable joke. The original is: "Bei einer guten Havana liebt man am meisten die ersten Züge und bei einer Schwiegermutter liebt man die letzten Züge." There is also an allusion to Trauerzug (funeral procession).

gets such things telegraphed to him, and they are often not quite so innocent as this. I wonder whether the public may not one fine day get a shock by the publication of some such telegram, because these things are not dispatched in cipher but simply *en clair*. After about half an hour the excitement over the stories subsided, and we sat down to a supper of sandwiches, beer and wine.

After that the conversation became serious, and home and foreign politics were discussed. The party broke up at 12.30. I escorted the Emperor, leading the way, the whole length of the train. His Majesty ordered breakfast at 8.30. He rather reminded one next morning of a corporal in a good humour, as he stood in the dining-car and asked everyone how he had slept. When I answered that I had slept well, he said : " What a pity. You had done nothing to deserve it." We sat over breakfast until we arrived at Wilhelmshaven at 10 o'clock.

The Emperor is less cocksure about the Morocco affair than he was some time ago. I was astonished at the almost respectful terms in which he referred to the French Army of which previously I had heard him speak very contemptuously. He is furious at the machinations of his uncle, the King of England, against him, and ascribes all the rumours which crop up now and again as to meetings between the King and himself to English intrigues. Their object is, he says, to prove unmistakably to the world that such interviews are impossible.

It was unpardonable, he says, of Russia to have ranged herself recklessly on the side of the Powers hostile to Germany. He contrasts with this action our friendly attitude to the Russian Government at its

most difficult moments. When somebody said that the Austrians had proved themselves our loyal allies, he said in a tone almost of pity : " Yes, those poor good Austrians." He is particularly incensed by the attitude Italy took up at Algeçiras, and said : " It has always been a habit of theirs to betray German Emperors and leave them in the lurch." When he speaks in this way his mysticism and romanticism add fuel to his dislike of their king.

The explanation of it all is that the unanimous opposition of all the Powers to Germany is considered by him as a personal insult to himself. To a great extent, of course, this is so. His highly gifted and independent personality is often distasteful to other foreign kings and statesmen. By always placing himself in the lime-light, by his interference with everything, even foreign politics, and, last but not least, by his arrogance and want of consideration in his personal relations, he has aroused not only hostility, but positive hatred.

Thus the King of England, the Czar, and the King of Italy are not only unfriendly but actually hostile to him, in spite of all his attempts to curry favour with them, and his positive pursuit of them. It is very largely due to the fact that the Emperor has often, both by word of mouth and in writing, expressed himself when he thought it was safe, quite without restraint, not to say vulgarly, about their Majesties, and this naturally has come to their ears.

In the case of the King of England another cause of estrangement is that, when he was still Prince of Wales and the Emperor was already a ruling sovereign, he often played the heavy uncle to him. The Emperor also succeeded in becoming the spoiled darling of his

grandmother, Queen Victoria, while the Prince of Wales' relations to his mother were not always of the happiest. The two monarchs, in fact, are as wide as the poles asunder in their views of the world. The King, not averse from pleasures of which the Emperor disapproves, has a clear, practical knowledge of men and facts; the Emperor, on the other hand, has remained a complete stranger to the realities of life, and the value of the purity and virtue of his private life is really discounted by his hypocrisy and pharisaical unctuousness.

The Emperor's energetic and unreflecting temperament makes the Czar unsympathetic to him. In spite of his efforts to win the Czar's friendship he will always remain a source of uneasiness to such a soft and irresolute nature. By his too condescending amiability and by his pose as an older and more experienced sovereign, and ruler of a larger Empire, he has wounded the King of Italy, and he on his side is unsparing in his condemnation of the King's free, socialistic ideas. The result was clearly seen at Algeçiras. The unfortunate personal relations of the Emperor with the rulers of foreign states had an unfavourable effect on the course of negotiations. The Kaiser himself feels this, and so his fundamental antagonism to the other crowned heads is only accentuated.

In Wilhelmshaven the Emperor went on board the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* at the swearing-in of the recruits. He spoke exceptionally well, but the speech as a whole was rather like a very good sermon; and in the last part his imagination got the better of him. He praised English soldiers so highly that it was almost a humiliation to the sailors who were just going to take the oath. It is worth noticing that in the newspaper reports which I saw to-day all references to this passage are omitted.

* * *

The cruise to Heligoland was postponed to the afternoon of the 14th because of bad weather, and the interval of two and a half days was filled up with inspections, reports, and long sittings at table. One hour before the start for Heligoland the Emperor had the brilliant idea of taking General von Kessel with him. When he saw how inconvenient this was for that gentleman, the Emperor immediately ordered room to be made for him on board and his luggage to be brought over at once from the special train. General von Kessel was exceedingly anxious to get back to Berlin, not only because he had urgent military duties, but also because he was a member of the Commission for the drawing up of the new Drill Regulations. But it was no good, and the more he showed the Emperor that he did not like it, the more visibly was the latter delighted with the idea of making him come to Heligoland. Shortly before starting the Emperor was walking up and down the deck. He came to me, rubbed his hands in glee and said: "That is how to catch rats. Kessel does not like it at all," and beamed with joy.

I did not feel at all comfortable because I was afraid that I too might be dragged along at the last moment. This would have been extremely unpleasant for me, because I should have been quite useless on the battleship, and I had only one new subordinate in the train who would probably have got into difficulties in case of any alteration in the plans for the return journey. Besides I had to attend to some purchases of wine and cigars in Bremen. It is always possible to get better terms for large purchases and orders at a personal interview and when one samples the goods oneself

than by correspondence, but I should not have dreamt of mentioning these things because the Emperor would not have listened to a word. I managed, however, to slip on shore and so to escape the fate of being taken to sea, perhaps even without my luggage—a by no means impossible fate for any of the *entourage*.

I then went along in the evening by the special train to Bremen so as to be prepared for every eventuality, whether the journey was to be via Wilhelmshaven or via Bremerhaven. The next afternoon I got a wireless message: "His Majesty will arrive at Bremerhaven at 5 o'clock. Arrangements for Saturday altered." I immediately got into communication with the railway authorities and managed to arrange that the special train should start at 5 o'clock and arrive at Bremerhaven at 6.20. I boarded His Majesty's ship *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* at 7 o'clock in Bremerhaven.

The railway authorities had begged me to let some of the officials of the North German Lloyd, whose attendance the Emperor had commanded, travel in the same train because, as they said, it was rather difficult to run two special trains at such a short interval. As this had already been done some years before, and as I thought that, on account of the change in the arrangements, the presence of these gentlemen was urgently required in Bremerhaven, I took them with me. When I arrived on board, His Excellency Herr von Senden informed me that the Emperor had received the telegram announcing that these gentlemen had been on the special train and was very angry.

I gathered from what Herr von Senden said that he looked on the action of these gentlemen in daring to enter his special train presumptuous and impudent. I went to the Emperor and told him that I alone was to

blame for their arrival. He was exceedingly annoyed, but gradually allowed me to tell him the whole story, and only interrupted me to say : " Such a thing must on no account occur again." Considering how angry he really was, the Kaiser was wonderfully gentle with me, but I have always noticed that if anyone looks him straight in the face and frankly takes the whole responsibility on himself, it always makes a great impression on him.

A little later I discovered that the telegram which was sent to me had been mutilated and said just the opposite to what was meant. The word *not* had simply been omitted and it ought to have read : " The arrangements for Saturday are not altered." I naturally had the telegram with me and could prove what I said.

The work of a Controller on a journey has no world-shaking significance but none the less it is nerve-racking and exhausting. It cannot in the slightest degree be compared with our work at home, when we have to manage seventy-six castles and palaces which require over £50,000 a year for repairs and maintenance alone, to say nothing of giving orders to forty cooks, providing liveries for as many as five hundred servants and making contracts for thousands of pounds worth of food and drink. The business correspondence is brought to us daily by couriers, but generally speaking, so long as there are no important changes, the journey only occasions trouble in connection with trivial requirements and changes of plan. But it is this perpetual uncertainty, the constant feeling of responsibility, this anxiety of having always to be at the right place at the right moment, often without really having anything to do, which imply an amount of self-effacement only to be appreciated by anyone who has experienced it in practice.

Last night at dinner conversation turned on the death of Eugene Richter, and the suggestion that the Court should pay any mark of attention to his funeral was stigmatised as a monstrous impertinence. In my opinion party squabbles should have an end in the presence of death, and as Richter was undoubtedly a man of considerable ability and influence it would have been more diplomatic to take some kind of appropriate notice. No good was done by making him a martyr in the eyes of the masses and providing agitators with a useful handle. However, I seldom give expression to such views as these, and when I do, my acquaintances very seldom agree with me; as a rule I am in a minority of one.

Not long ago I had a conversation with the Secretary of State, Count Posadowsky, when we agreed that the too common habit of keeping silence about one's own convictions and not attempting to support them, was fraught with danger for the future. He told me that, on one occasion, he had begged Prince Hohenlohe[1] when he was Chancellor, to make a report to His Majesty about an urgent matter. He said: "Your Excellency has reached the highest position Your Excellency can attain. Your Excellency has the highest Orders. Your Excellency has been Ambassador in Paris and Statthalter in Alsace, the most eminent positions that are obtainable in this life. Your Excellency is financially quite independent. Your Excellency need never sacrifice the least part of your social position. You are of an age which would make it easy to resign all your offices on the plea that you need rest. Will Your

[1] *13th March* 1906.—Chlodwig Hohenlohe-Schillingfürst, Chancellor as successor of Caprivi, Stattholder in Alsace in 1885, not to be confused with Hermann Hohenlohe-Langenburg, who was Stattholder from 1894-1907, referred to on p. 26.

Excellency then, in view of all these circumstances, not give the report to His Majesty, seeing that the matter is of such extreme importance?" After long reflection the Chancellor answered: "No. I am really sorry. I cannot do it." Then Count Posadowsky said: "I begged for permission to make this report to His Majesty myself," and the Chancellor gave the necessary leave.

The most extraordinary thing is that the Emperor, after first refusing, agreed to the proposals of Count Posadowsky.

I then told the Count that I quite understood this, for the old Chancellor had, like so many people who had often to discuss things with His Majesty, completely lost his vision and his nerve.

The Emperor is often not only irritable when his opinions are opposed, but he has an instinctive knack of avoiding people who even approach him with inconvenient ideas, and has artificially educated most of us only to prophesy smooth things and tell him what he wants to hear.

In spite of his extraordinary adroitness and shrewdness, the Chancellor, Prince Bülow, as I have often noticed, is in no sense an exception. If he would only screw up his courage once to show the smallest hesitation in saying "Yes," or to allow the Emperor to feel that he is, after all, independent of his position, he could achieve great things, because as an individual he is quite indispensable to the Emperor; but unhappily that is not his nature.

Take it all in all, I have become more pessimistic in my view of public affairs. The Emperor's autocratic leanings grow stronger every day and this lands us in ever increasing difficulties both at home and abroad. On the other side of the scale the remarkable progress

of our people is most hopeful. The increase of population in the last ten years is proof of an abundant vigour and shows that the social and economic condition of the masses is, after all, not so very bad. Of this, last year's six million individual payments made to the Savings Banks are an eloquent testimony. In spite of all this, however, I believe that the hopes of unquestionable prosperity in the future are not so bright as they were a comparatively short time ago. I then thought the odds against future disaster might be taken as four to one. I should say only two to one now.

As I was returning from the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* about 10.30 on the evening of 16th March, to my special train which was standing in the station, von Tschirschky and Bögendorff [1] had just arrived, and were going to spend the night on the train and cross over to the *Kaiser Wilhelm II.* at a quarter to eight in the morning. I know Count von Tschirschky well, because of the many journeys which he has madein the Imperial Suite as His Majesty's diplomatic representative. I have often discussed politics and religion with him, and have been astonished and delighted to find that we agreed on so many points. I value this particularly because I seldom find it so with the majority of people with whom I come into contact. We spent the evening together in our dining-car in the court train and sat till long after midnight. The first thing we discussed was the Polish question. He quite agreed with me that every step the Government was taking, especially by way of coercion, so far from having any good effect, was absolutely dangerous, and largely resulted in the

[1] *Von Tschirschky*—At that time Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Appointed Ambassador in Vienna, Nov. 1907, which office he held at the outbreak of the War.

very opposite of what was intended. This is another proof how artificial interference in the natural course of things, particularly economic conditions, always has the most unexpected consequences.

From the Polish question the conversation turned to the religious troubles in France. Here, too, we were agreed that these troubles were an expression not of the weakness but of the strength of the country, and could only have a beneficial effect. I suggested that in Germany, too, separation of Church and State must come sooner or later. Herr von Tschirschky quite agreed with me and said the sooner it came about the better. But his opinion as to the actual time when it was likely to happen was more pessimistic than my own.

Then we discussed foreign politics. In a sense, he has all the threads in his hands, and therefore I was surprised to find him taking a still gloomier view than I do. "As to Algeçiras," he said, "we have landed ourselves into opposition, not only to the whole of Europe, with the exception of Austria, but to the whole world. Up to now we have only retired step by step; now we shall have to make a big retreat." Herr von Tschirschky mentioned the word "Olmütz,"[1] and compared our situation of to-day with that of those times. He said further: "We cannot allow it to come to war, and it won't come. But whether or not those political adventures will not sooner or later bring us into a position, where the decision is taken out of our own hands—that is on the knees of the gods." In his heart of hearts it is true the Emperor does not want war, because he knows perfectly well how stupendous the risks would

[1] *Olmütz.* At a conference in 1850, Prussia suffered a severe diplomatic defeat at the hands of Austria, which was, however, the prelude of the war of 1866.

be, but he always wants to achieve great objects with the smallest trouble, and win laurels without danger.

What I have just written conflicts with the common report of the Emperor's opinions. On the one hand people say he is full of praise of Herr von Radowitz's[1] attitude at Algeçiras; on the other hand we are told that he says to the gentlemen of the Paris Embassy whenever he has an opportunity (he said it to Herr von Flotow, the Chancellor of the Embassy when he was here the other day): "You gentlemen at Paris have no nerve." It makes me wonder how far the Emperor is rightly informed; but this is just one of the consequences of his refusing to listen to anything he does not like, and only asking to have smooth things prophesied. Thus he never learns; he deceives himself and is deceived by others.

Our return on Sunday the 17th was via Bremen, where we visited the Rathskeller, and all went off according to programme.

22nd March 1906.

Yesterday evening we had a very brilliant Concert in the White Hall with an audience of seven hundred. The Russian Ambassador, Count Osten-Sacken, sent his apologies in the afternoon owing to sudden indisposition, an excuse possibly not unconnected with the revelations in the *Temps*, which announces that Russia had declared her intention of voting with France at Algeçiras. At least His Majesty said: "It is a pity that Osten-Sacken was not here: I should have given him a good dressing down. Even if things had got so lively that he had started straight away home I should not have cared." When His Majesty made

[1] *Herr von Radowitz.* German Ambassador in Madrid from 1892.

this remark to his intimate circle in the Pillar Hall after the Concert, the Chancellor happened to hear it. He said later, when he was going away: "Well, it was a good job that Osten-Sacken did not come to the Concert."

17th April 1906.

Religion and mysticism are now playing an increasingly large part in the Emperor's speeches, for which the abject flattery and subservience of the Court Chaplains are largely responsible. These ministers of religion have developed pharisaism and self-deception to an incredible pitch. At Wernigerode, on the occasion of the handing over of the pastoral staff to Baroness Welck, Abbess of the Convent of Drübeck, the Emperor spoke for the first time from a pulpit.

Professor A. von Werner [1] was invited to dinner one evening not long ago. He knew so well how to flatter the Emperor, and made such good use for his own purposes of the Emperor's notorious dislike of modern tendencies in Art, that the conversation lasted till midnight. The Emperor, who is so sensitive and so ready to pull people up sharply when they indulge in self-glorification, allowed this gentleman the most extraordinary liberty, and tolerated the most astonishing arrogance from him without protest. In the end Herr von Werner really spoke as if he were of the supreme authority on Art in Berlin, and were constantly being asked for advice and instruction by all his colleagues.

Nearly everybody is now convinced that we have definitely come out of the Morocco affair very badly. In spite of this, *Der Deutsche*, a paper which is in close touch with Prince Bülow,[2] managed in a recent article

[1] *Anton von Werner*, 1843-1915, historical painter.

[2] *Von Bülow* had been raised to the rank of Prince on the occasion of

to suggest that we might congratulate ourselves on a striking triumph of German diplomacy. The Emperor himself read this article out a few days ago in the library and, although latterly he has been cherishing very few illusions about German success, or rather the want of it, at Algeçiras, he was much gratified by it. He remains, as ever, readily responsive to this sort of byzantinism. The responsibility rests on those who select the newspaper cuttings for the Emperor, and still more on those who get newspaper articles written solely for the purpose of having them brought to his notice. It would be the best of medicines for His Majesty occasionally to read some of the opposition papers, and to read them straight through.

His recent telegram to Count Goluchowski [1] can only be explained by the reflection that he lives entirely in a world of one-sided ideas of his own. Except Major von Neumann, there is probably not one single person in the Emperor's *entourage* who would not have dissuaded him from sending this telegram, if he had been asked. It was a case in which, with his impulsive temperament, he took the bit in his teeth. He is perfectly aware that his advisers would gently and cautiously head him off, so whenever he is really bent on doing a particular thing, his practice is not to tell them anything before-hand, or at best to inform them in such a way that they cannot venture to express an opinion.

This always reminds me of von Tschirschky's remark one day when we were going for a walk: "We are all the Emperor's victims: he is our cross."

the Crown Prince's wedding, ostensibly because of the success of the Morocco policy.

[1] *Count Goluchowski*, Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, 1895 till October 1906.

CHAPTER IX

A TROUBLESOME YEAR

24th February 1907.

ON the 19th February 1907, the Emperor opened the Reichstag in the White Hall, with more than usual ceremony, in view of the Elections after the Dissolution of the Reichstag, which had resulted very favourably for the Government. The insignia of the Empire, which as a matter of fact are not the insignia of the Empire at all, but only those of a King of Prussia, were meant to give the function an added significance. The opening was preceded by a Service in the Castle Chapel for the Evangelical members. Soon after the function was over, at 12.40, the Emperor took his annual journey to Wilhelmshaven for the swearing-in of the recruits.

I was the first to arrive at the station, with Admiral von Müller, Chief of the Marine Cabinet. We discussed the celebrations, especially the obsequious address of the preacher in the Chapel. Müller said: "I believe that everybody present must have disapproved of it." Soon after that we entered the train and sat down to lunch. One of the first things the Emperor said was: "It is a long time since I heard such an excellent sermon. It was really a masterpiece." Anyone who knows the impulsive nature of the Emperor, and how strongly he is wedded to certain convictions, will realise that any contradiction was out of the question.

The Emperor's speech at the swearing-in of the

recruits at Wilhelmshaven, was, as a speech, extraordinarily good; but for a Supreme War Lord, he always inclines somewhat too strongly to religion, even to mysticism. He really believes that only a good Christian can be a good soldier. Astonishing as it seems, he has genuinely persuaded himself of this, even to the point of fanaticism. When he talks like this, he seems to have quite forgotten the Japanese, Napoleon I., Frederick the Great, Caesar, Alexander, and the rest.

At the luncheon at the Officers' Casino after the swearing-in, I sat nearly opposite the Emperor and next to Admiral Tirpitz. He is very agreeable and interesting; very versatile and exceptionally well informed, and takes broad views. The Emperor happened to drink his health just at a moment, when his champagne glass was empty. The Admiral rose and looked round for an orderly to fill his glass. The Emperor called out in a friendly tone: "Give me your glass; I will help you out," and poured out half the wine from it into his own, and each of them emptied his glass.

As there was a gale blowing the Emperor cancelled the intended cruise to Heligoland, and remained all the time on the *Deutschland* in the harbour at Wilhelmshaven. At the last moment I happened to be talking to Admiral von Hollmann and General von Plessen, when the Emperor suddenly noticed some cigar ash on the carpet by my feet. He pounced on me, and said: "Of course, this is the sort of thing I have to put up with from my Controllers. Instead of looking after my property, they do more to spoil it than anybody else." He shook his clenched fist close to my face and said: "I will teach you how to behave yourself, in a way that you won't forget in a hurry."

Although such little episodes with the Emperor are common enough and we are all quite used to them, I must say I was deeply hurt. I immediately felt that it was difficult to do anything, because the Emperor always treats these things half as a joke, and half seriously, so that everybody used to good society feels sure that he is not in earnest. If I take it seriously, I only risk more painful consequences. This is one of the things that has helped the Emperor to obtain such absolute sway over all about him. Everybody is afraid of his want of consideration. Naturally too he always has the laugh on his side. All the same I took this little incident to heart—trivial as it was for anybody who knows the circumstances.

I used the opportunity of the return journey from Bremen, where we had breakfast in the Ratskeller, to ask His Majesty for an audience in his private saloon, when he was working there alone. He was sitting at the window reading reports that had just come in, when he received me. I bowed, and he looked at me quite frankly, and I asked him whether I might humbly beg leave to report to him a strictly personal matter. This obviously aroused suspicions; he hesitated with his answer, and evidently thought I was going to make some inconvenient request. I took advantage of this pause to begin at once, and told him that I felt myself deeply wounded and hurt by the treatment I had received the previous evening on board the *Deutschland*. Besides, I said, it was not I at all who had let the ash fall on the carpet; one of the other gentlemen must have done it.

The Emperor at first looked at me in blank astonishment and said: "I have not the least idea what you are talking about." I told him again that on the pre-

vious evening he had suddenly caught sight of ash on the carpet, and then half jokingly and half seriously had accused me of it, and made me ridiculous before all the company in a manner which was very painful to me. Then he said: "Now I know what you are talking about." When I repeated once again that his whole manner had made a painful impression on me which it was not in me to forget in a moment, he saw that I really meant it, and said: "Come, come, we often make such jokes among *Kamaraden*."

I replied that I had been particularly hurt because of the presence of the junior officers. I begged him to remember that I was already in my forty-fourth year. He said: "But you look only twenty-eight. You must get yourself a thicker hide." Finally, he nodded his head and said: "It is all right." Whereupon I bowed and madè my exit.

I am anxious to see what view the Emperor will take of what I have done. At supper, at which I sat opposite to him as usual, the conversation took its ordinary course. No one could have noticed that there had been an incident such a short time ago between the Emperor and myself, and I had not mentioned it to a soul. At the same time I have a kind of feeling that nothing like it has ever happened to him before, or if at all, not for a long time. I am the more curious about the results which will not, however, be apparent for some time to come.

When we got back, we at once drove to the New Theatre, where there was an excellent performance of *Phèdre*, with Suzanne Desprès and her French company.

16*th March* 1907.

I am under the impression that since the little scene during the return journey from Bremen, the Emperor

is watching me more closely than he ever did before. He looks as if he were trying not to bear me a grudge, but is much more distant with me than he used to be. I believe that if anything were really to go wrong in connection with my duties, he would give me blacker looks than he would to anyone else. But I am fairly certain that I shall have less to suffer in future from jokes of a certain unpleasant kind. Take it altogether, I can only wish that this state of things may continue.

The Dutch Minister, Baron Gevers, was here and told me that on the occasion of the last Court function, the Emperor told him that the Imperial Manœuvres would take place this year in the immediate neighbourhood of the Dutch Frontier, and he would be very glad if the Queen of the Netherlands would attend them, or at least the Review near Münster. The Minister added that he had communicated with the Hague, and the answer had been that Her Majesty regretted very much that she could not be present on this occasion, but would send a delegation to represent her.

This is not very important—all the less since there is ample precedent for it—but it is decidedly significant. We are always to some extent running after other Crowned Heads. Eventually we learn with astonishment that they are really not friendly, and the majority are actually hostile.

19*th March* 1907.

Yesterday evening, after a very solemn dinner of the knights of the Order of St. John, at which there were 287 guests, the Emperor ordered the attendance of Baron von Seckendorff, Court Controller of Prince Henry, and Admiral von Usedom in the Equerries' Room to smoke with him. As I knew that the Emperor

wanted to see some other gentlemen I invited General von Hahnke, von Scholl, Count Hülsen-Haeseler, and von Plessen. The two equerries, von Friedeburg and von Senden were also present.

The Emperor, who was suffering from a little indisgestion was rather silent at the beginning of the evening, but about eleven o'clock he began to talk freely about the policy of England and grew rather excited. He complained bitterly of the intrigues that his uncle, the King of England, was carrying on against him. He said he knew all about them from private letters from France, and King Edward was equally hard at work in every other country. The whole press of the world, including that of America, had already been mobilised against him by English money, and it was extraordinary how much personal animosity his uncle's attitude revealed. He ended with the words: "He is a Satan; you can hardly believe what a Satan he is." He added that Clémenceau had a few days before called on Prince Radolin, the German Ambassador in Paris, and assured him that France wanted peace, but was afraid she would be dragged into war by England, and any unexpected little incident might develop into a serious danger.

Yesterday morning Prince Eitel Friedrich was solemnly installed as Grand Master of the Order of St. John. At about eleven o'clock I led the Emperor by way of the Nonnengang to the Marine Hall, where he was to put on the mantle of the Order. Here Herr von Lucanus[1] was anxious to make use of the moment to obtain a prompt answer from him on an urgent question, and he had scarcely begun when he was very brutally

[1] Hermann von Lucanus—For many years chief of the Emperor's Privy Civil Cabinet. Born 1831, died 1908.

stopped with: "I really have no time now for your business."

Though spoiled by a good deal of mummery and insincerity, the function was very dignified and picturesque. Not our worst enemy can deny that we do understand how to carry out such ceremonies and functions smoothly and with all imaginable splendour. In this case it was only made possible by four rehearsals of an hour and a half each in the presence of His Majesty.

During the ceremony Count Hutten-Czapski said to me: "It is extraordinary what a lot of time these people waste over things like these." I replied: "The waste of time is bad enough, but the way it turns so many men's heads is much worse." The whole affair had a certain element of tragedy because Prince Friedrich Heinrich, who had already been elected Grand Master, had to resign his dignity. Like everybody else, I knew of course of the stories to the detriment of the Prince's character . . . but I had really attached little significance to them, and when I heard of this resignation and the wild rumours in connection with it, I was completely surprised. I have now learnt on the best authority that Count Wedel-Sandfort had written to the Prince, and in view of these reports urgently advised him not to take the Grand Mastership. . . .

The Prince wrote a desperate letter to Count Wedel,[1] the Master of Ceremonies, who was just then in attendance on the Empress, asking him for advice and begging him to put the matter before the Emperor in as good a light as he could, so as to prevent the most

[1] Count Wilhelm von Wedel-Piesdorf—Royal Prussian Minister of the Household from 1888.

disastrous consequences. Incredible though it may seem, Count Wedel showed the Prince's letter to the Emperor. Then of course the Prince was lost. The Emperor decided on another Grand Master, which was looked on as an indirect confirmation of the wildest rumours; and the Prince will probably labour under suspicion for the rest of his life. When one thinks what a good but weak man he is, and when one reflects on the brilliant material position to which he succeeded not so long ago on the death of his father, it is a terrible tragedy. . . .

On the other hand, not long ago, there was a tremendous disturbance about a quite ridiculous and insignificant affair of his younger brother with a lady, as if it had really been important. When one has devoted as much time and trouble as I have had to do for five years in shielding these two Princes from scandal, and whitewashing them in all moments of trial and difficulty, it is very depressing to reflect that it was all in vain. At that time there were whole nights in which I did not close my eyes, through dread that my Princes would be involved in and ultimately compromised. . . .

A few days ago the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the Austrian throne, came here with the utmost secrecy. Even the Austrian Embassy had no idea of it. The Archduke had dined in the evening with the German Ambassador, Count Wedel,[1] and then come on to Berlin by the night train. He drove to the Hotel Bristol, and then came in the afternoon with a definite appointment, quite unobtrusively and in mufti with his adjutant to the Castle. He was conducted to the Emperor by one of the footmen quite secretly through the most private rooms of the Wardrobe.

[1] *Count Carl von Wedel*—Ambassador in Vienna, 1902-1908. He must be distinguished from Count Wilhelm von Wedel-Piesdorf above.

In spite of all attempts at concealment, news of his visit leaked out, and naturally the most extraordinary rumours were spread about this mysterious journey. The Polish question, the Brunswick question, the question of the army in Austria, and even the abdication of the Emperor Francis Joseph, were all mentioned in the papers as possible reasons for his journey. As a matter of fact the subject discussed at this interview of the heir to the Austrian throne with the Emperor was the question of the position of his wife, Countess Chotek, in the event of his accession.

It would not be easy, but it might in my opinion be quite possible for the heir to the Austrian throne to come to Berlin mysteriously and for the secret to be kept—but if he insists on the royal rooms at the station being opened for him, and has a compartment in the train reserved for him in his name, and drives with his adjutants and Suite to the Hotel Bristol, it is really the height of simplicity to suppose that there is the slightest chance of such a visit not becoming public property.

20th March 1907.

There is a great deal of talk and not without good cause, over Prince Friedrich Heinrich being gazetted *à la suite* of the Second Regiment of Dragoons. If we begin by admitting that he cannot be Grand Master of the Order of St. John . . . it is hardly logical that he should be an officer *à la suite* of a regiment . . . but in all probability the whole thing will be ignored and finally denied. . . . An incident which seems likely to have more serious consequences is connected with Prince Adalbert.[1] He earned a very bad reputation in the Navy, both as

[1] *Prince Adalbert*—The Emperor's third son.

an officer and by his way of life. He behaved more like a Russian Grand Duke than a simple unassuming Prussian Prince of the traditional type, who lived only for the Service. As he held entirely aloof from the social life of the ship and showed a great predilection for his fantastically decorated villa in Kiel, it was thought that this might best be met by an order, confining young unmarried officers to their ships. A report to this effect made to the Emperor accordingly resulted in an order that no unmarried naval officer should in future reside on shore.

This was much too grandmotherly and drastic a regulation, and was constantly evaded by the officers affected. But Prince Adalbert, against whom it was specially directed, remains calmly on in his villa, and no superior officer has dared to move in the matter, or to bring it to the notice of a competent authority. It is really no exaggeration to say that this is the Russian way, not ours. Yet we are never tired of talking of our venerable Prussian traditions, our conscientious discharge of duty, and our simple rule of life.

At the investiture of Prince Eitel Friedrich, Prince Henry of the Netherlands received the accolade. He is still not prepossessing in appearance though he has become rather fat. I always think of the adjutant who said of the Prince: "*Nous avions demandé un taureau et on nous a envoyé un bœuf.*" This is rather harsh and crude, but one can only sympathise with the Prince in not having a son who might one day become King of the Netherlands.

19th April 1907.

Why is it necessary to make such large increases in our fleet? People say it is for the protection and develop-

ment of our trade. I ask myself: "Has Holland no trade to protect, and has her commerce not continually increased without a great fleet?" The only result of our naval armaments at the present moment is that we have succeeded in arousing the envy and suspicion of the whole world. England, not without reason, sees in our navy a threat; for the object of our armaments is undoubtedly to bring us up to her level. The result is that she, too, is arming at a great pace, and as the resources of England are greater than ours, we are bound to assume that she will remain our superior. What then is the use of all this enormous expenditure, and of arousing mistrust and jealousy by our foreign policy? There are moments when we are really proud of our fleet, and say that England will probably hesitate before she attacks us; that even now it would be too great a risk for her. That may be. But this is only a negative success, purchased at too high a cost, and there may come a day when everything will turn out quite differently from what we expect.

But to-day I see no reason for pride. It always seems as if England were able to build more quickly, judiciously, and even cheaply than we are. Our shipbuilding yards, in spite of orders from the State, never appear to attain to more than an artificial vitality, and one cannot but notice how few orders for ships we get from abroad. Is not this perhaps because things are not so brilliant with us as we could wish? The whole development of the fleet strikes me as unreal and unnatural, and instead of being a help to us, it is clearly not unaccompanied by danger.

A few days ago the Emperor spoke of our new Naval Law in which he said he had absolutely fooled the members of the Reichstag. They had not the smallest

idea, he added, when they passed it, what its consequences would be, for the law really meant that anything which he wanted would have to be granted. Even as long ago as last winter the Centre discovered the fact, and offered him a whole division of ships of the line if he would let the bill drop; but the Emperor continued: "I thank you for nothing, for this law gives me every division of ships of the line that I want. It is like a corkscrew with which I can open the bottle any moment I like. Even if the froth spurts to the ceiling, the dogs will have to pay until they are black in the face. I have now got them in the hollow of my hand, and no power in the world will stop me from drinking the bottle dry."

7th June 1907.

The effect of Harden's [1] article in the *Zukunft* seems to be that Prince Eulenburg, Count von Moltke [2] and Count Hohenau have fallen into disfavour and have been—or will immediately be—cashiered, and are never again to appear at Court. Harden's attack is chiefly inspired by the belief that we are suffering from a camarilla, which uses its influence for political purposes.

Latterly every political event in Germany has been attributed to the Eulenburg "Round Table." As a matter of fact, the Emperor has never taken Prince Eulenburg (and still less Count von Moltke), seriously in politics. Besides, Prince Eulenburg has no political ambitions, and above all it is a long time since he has been in close touch with the Emperor. Of late they have met in Rominten only once a year, and the

[1] Maximilian Harden, the famous journalist, founded *Die Zukunft*, which he edited in 1892.

[2] Count Kuno von Moltke, not to be confused with Helmuth von Moltke, later Chief of the Staff.

Emperor has gone every autumn for a few days to Liebenberg. Besides this, Eulenburg has generally been invited to luncheon once or twice a year. There have been these casual meetings, but no continued intimacy, for many years past.

The whole idea of a political camarilla is altogether mistaken, and quite inconsistent with the temperament of the Emperor with his constant anxiety not to fall under any external influence whatever. The idea is only justified in so far as it is the Emperor's way to discuss most current political affairs with anybody who happens to be present, so that a chance word from anyone—even the most insignificant equerry—may acquire importance. But for this reason no really dominant camarilla can ever be discovered, still less destroyed. In a certain sense everybody who is at Court at all belongs to it, even down to the most bigoted of the Empress' ladies. . . .

The chief talent of Prince Eulenburg was his unequalled gift for anecdote, by which he could entertain the Emperor from morning till night. He had an endless fund of stories and jokes of every *nuance*. In politics he was a reactionary, and his morbid imagination and ideas made him a danger both in home and foreign politics. If the Emperor had really taken him seriously, we should have seen many more astonishing things in the political world than have actually come to pass. But, on the other hand, the Prince was a very amiable and distinguished man of the world, and popular in the widest circles as a brilliant talker.

A great deal has been written about the influence of these aristocrats, but the question is rather, who at the moment has any influence. In the first line it is the military *entourage*. Some of the things they have

suggested in the last few days only prove how narrow-minded they are, and how lacking in foresight and knowledge of the world. They proposed that Prince Eulenburg should be made to return his Order of the Black Eagle: he was to be banished from Berlin and from Prussia altogether, that is to say from his own estates. All this, of course, before he had been proved to have committed any offence. Only because he did not at once horsewhip, shoot, or at least prosecute Harden, these good people assumed the truth of all the accusations, which this clever, but perhaps not too scrupulous writer had brought against the Prince. . . . To crown all, a certain influential General got wind of the fact that Harden was receiving a good deal of information from persons closely connected with the Court, and so he proposed to ask him for the names of these people. Ingenuous as this method may seem, the Chief Chamberlain was summoned by telegraph and commanded to go to Harden and obtain these names. These examples are quite sufficient to make it clear what extraordinary stupidity may be expected, when political influence is wielded by men who have grown grey in the narrow life of the barrack-room and in exclusive military circles.

All the papers are full of the Eulenburg camarilla. Concerning others who are always with the Emperor and really have a power for mischief, they are silent. Unfortunately, it is often the most commonplace person who finds it easiest to win the Emperor's favour most completely. Of course he is too big a man not to see through such men after a certain time, but their servility in echoing all his own ideas and wishes is a constant danger to him.

When I think of these things, I am often reminded

of Herr von Studt, the Minister of the "Vision Beautiful."[1] In the opinion of all who know best, he has been finished for many years. Even a generous loyal man, such for instance, as my father, is astonished at his decrepitude. He has exposed himself to numberless moral defeats. More than once the Press has thought that he was bound to go at last, but he has always quietly kept on wearing his ministerial chains. The explanation of the mystery is of course that the Emperor has always backed him up. That this is the fact is quite clear from what the Emperor said to me one day: "Of all my Ministers, von Studt is the best. He does not mind abuse in the Press, or attacks in Parliament. I can always bank on his doing just what I tell him to, and he does not care a fig for anything else." It is really amazing that a man like the Emperor should say such things straight out—even in confidence. But unfortunately there is no better explanation of the way in which toadies and mediocrities so often force their abler competitors into the shade.

The most tragical of all the results of these outbursts of moral zeal is the fate of Prince Frederich Heinrich. The higher powers vacillate between the wildest alarm and reckless action, and the revelation of his name by Harden in the *Zukunft* was followed at first by half-hearted attempts at denial, and then by complete condemnation. He is not to be seen in Berlin at all; he is to live abroad, and, after a time, only to stay quietly in Kamenz now and again. He is to be deprived of his military adjutants, and whether or not he may remain Colonel *à la suite* of the Schwedt Regiment of Dragoons, has not yet been decided. I hope that it

[1] Conrad von Studt—Prussian Minister of Education (Kultusminister), 1899-1907. Died 1921.

will be established in the course of time that very little has been proved against the Prince.

The whole thing remains a terrible tragedy, for the Prince is at heart a good man, and devoted to duty. But all these affairs show how desperately badly so many things are managed at Court. If the Crown Prince had not shown the Emperor the *Zukunft* in Glienicke, probably none of these scandals would have arisen. Accidents rule our world, and the advice of the strangest counsellors sometimes decides the issue. Hardly ever is anything discussed calmly and objectively with the proper authorities before overhasty decisions are made. But how seldom can even the proper authorities express their real opinions. Many is the time that I think a world, whose fortunes are directed in this way, cannot endure long. Fortunately, however, it is not actually as bad as it looks; the country's power of resistance is too great. . . . The Emperor is badly compromised, but the structure of State and Society is more firmly knit than one might gather, and even though much of our heritage from our forefathers has been squandered, it has remained too sound and solid to be wholly dissipated. Germany has been so favoured by fortune, that she has till now always been strong enough to resist the evil influence of any one man. But there is always the possibility, with affairs pursuing their present course, that some man may endanger even prosperity as great as ours.

14th June 1907.

Prince Joachim Albrecht has recently returned from South-West Africa. He had been sent to the war because he had compromised himself with a lady. It

was probably hardly the custom in the past to send a Prince to a war as a punishment, and it is to be hoped that in future this will be considered an honour. The plan incidentally turned out unluckily, because when the Prince arrived there, the war was practically over. At any rate he was never under fire, and has now returned after an absence of about six months.

I had a long conversation on the matter with Count Hülsen-Haeseler. He expressed the opinion that the Prince is now grown-up and should be allowed to decide for himself how he will act in the matter of this lady. At the same time the least that is to be expected of a Prince of the Royal House is that he shall not compromise himself with her openly, and shall declare that he has no intention of marrying her. As far as I know the circumstances, I think this quite reasonable. After Count Hülsen had reported the matter to His Majesty, I asked him what had been decided. He pulled a long face and said the Emperor would have nothing to do with it. "It is no good trying to talk to him. He banged the table with his fist and shouted: 'My own sons have nothing to do with women. Why should other young men?'" One really cannot help feeling a little uneasy when a father of six sons says such a thing in deadly earnest.

It is worth putting on record another remark of the Emperor's, which he also made in Wiesbaden, as it throws a light on many things. Some of the Emperor's cars had been damaged on the long run from Karlsruhe to Wiesbaden, and were out of use for the next few days. This annoyed the Emperor and he reprimanded the Master of the Horse in the presence of the whole Court. Von Reischach tried to explain that in the present stage of the motor industry one must always be prepared for

occasional break downs, and that the only possible protection against inconvenience was to have a larger number of cars, and that this, considering the number of journeys that His Majesty made, would entail very heavy expenditure. The Emperor answered, very roughly and sharply: "What anything that I want costs, is a matter of supreme indifference. All I ask is that everything shall go smoothly, and you are responsible." The words "a matter of supreme indifference" keep running in my ears. It is an attitude which may one day come home to roost with a vengeance.

The affair of Prince Joachim Albrecht has been settled. Count Hülsen submitted to the Emperor a draft of special instructions for the Prince. I read them through myself, and can only say that they were most adroitly drawn up in carefully general terms. One may read them equally well to mean that the Prince is to have nothing more to do with this lady, or that he has permission to live with her discreetly. I did not conceal my opinion from Count Hülsen, and he replied: "No other way was possible. The Emperor would never have approved any other instructions. I shall now write to General Schenk, the Prince's Brigade Commander, and tell him to read these instructions to his Royal Highness, and to add verbally that the Prince is at liberty to meet the lady in private, but is not to compromise himself with her openly, and is to express no wish to marry her."

At parade I spoke to General von Schenk, who told me that everything had happened as I have just written, and that the Prince had given his written promise in regard to the last part.

Now the Emperor knows nothing of these verbal instructions. That is the result of trying to rule and

reform the world on too strict principles of virtue. Which, however, is the more important for a State, that the love affairs of a Prince should be hushed up, or that there should be truth and honesty in carrying on the nation's business? To my mind the latter.

There has just been another gambling scandal in Hanover.[1] At the very beginning of his reign the Emperor believed that he had abolished gambling by severe measures and warnings. Strangely enough, nothing of the kind has happened. The Commander of the Riding School asked his officers which of them were guilty of gambling. Thirty confessed. All of these have now been retired, transferred, and so on. The Emperor was at Hanover two days ago and spoke very severely on the subject. No end has ever been put to gambling, but a Commander who thus puts the question point blank, and to whom thirty officers confess, is a new phenomenon. The worst is that everybody says most of the most hardened offenders did not confess. How can any Commander bring himself to provoke a scandal in this way, when he knows the times in which we are living? No doubt because he knows that by doing so he strengthens his own reputation as a man of high moral principle and energy. Naturally gambling must not be allowed to gain the upper hand among officers, but there are sensible ways of keeping it within bounds. In this case there has been a sad lack of intelligence and a lamentable want of adaptability to circumstances.

15th June 1907.

A few days ago the Master of the Household, Herr von Wedel, read his report to the Emperor in the New

[1] See p. 141.

Palace. We know that he has been wishing for a complete establishment for the Crown Prince in the Castle of Babelsberg. To make it clear what this means, one must realise that, first of all, a great deal of ground will have to be cleared to make sufficient room. More than £150,000 will be needed for the extension and the improvement of the Castle itself, but even granted that this would really be enough for the Crown Prince—which I do not believe, since as things are to-day, accommodation for the Staff will swallow up large sums—it would certainly not suffice when he ascends the throne.

During the past nineteen years continuous efforts have been made to make the New Palace in all respects an adequate imperial residence. Colossal sums have been sunk in it, and if we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that we have not finished yet. Now the Minister is advocating that the Castle of Babelsberg shall be presented to the Crown Prince so completely equipped that he can take up his residence there now instead of later on, when he is Emperor.

I cannot imagine how a man who is always grumbling, and is so mean and niggardly in all money matters, should come to hatch out such a curious plan. In this case it means that millions will be thrown into the gutter. Apart from this reckless waste, it is also impossible to justify the abandonment of the New Palace after so much money has been poured into it. If the New Palace is not used, the greater part of all the money spent on it will have been wasted in twenty or thirty years' time; and then, if it were ever inhabited after that, we should have to begin at the beginning again. The essential point of all this is that the Crown Prince is at the moment very well

lodged in his Marble Palace and Town Castle, and that the plan for putting the Castle of Babelsberg into condition is pure extravagance.

When Eulenburg, Lyncker and I were talking the matter over, Eulenburg said: "I cannot understand the Master of the Household. He really cannot be himself. Everybody knows that he has always been grumbling about finance, and now without rhyme or reason, he wants to throw away millions and millions." Count Wedel must really have lost all grip, and moreover through his long residence at Court, he has become so servile that he is quite incapable of any opposition to wishes which come from above. In fact he is always thinking how he can anticipate them. A further psychological reason for his anxiety to please the Crown Prince, which has already shown itself, is the fact that his son-in-law, Count Bismarck-Bohlen, is Chamberlain to the Crown Princess, and he would be glad to find a place for him as Controller of the Crown Prince's Court because Count Trotha is bound to retire before long. I believe that he is obsessed by this last idea to a degree which is positively dangerous.

16th June 1907.

Harden now declares that his charges against Prince Eulenburg, Count Hohenau, and Count Moltke have been completely misunderstood. What the end of it will be no one can tell. I am afraid that it will be very difficult to do anything to Harden, but how ridiculous we have once more made ourselves. The recklessness with which men in the highest positions and the best friends of our Sovereign have been compromised is unpardonable. Now it appears that neither in the case of Prince

Eulenburg nor that of Count Moltke is there any evidence. This is the result of moral fanaticism which only breeds hypocrisy. . . .

Count Robert Zedlitz Trutzschler to his Father

Wilhelmshöhe, 15th September 1907.

"My Dear Father,—The fate of the Master of the Household[1] was settled yesterday. His resignation has been accepted, and Count Eulenburg has been instructed to carry on the business of the department of the Master of the Household temporarily, while retaining his position as Chief Marshal of the Court.

"It seems to me in the present circumstances the best possible solution of the difficulty, but we shall have to wait some time before it is certain how far Count Eulenburg can delegate his less important duties, how far his physical and mental strength will stand it. As things are, it is becoming daily more important that a man should be *persona grata* than that he should be possessed of outstanding abilities. Eulenburg has the great advantage that he combines all the necessary qualities, and in this lies the secret of his exceptional capacity.

"That age is no obstacle to the discharge of a multiplicity of functions is strikingly proved by the example of Lucanus. He has aged so much since last spring that one really feels alarmed whenever he has to go from one room to another, and there are signs of mental decay too; yet, as a matter of fact, he does a large part, and that not the least important, of the business of all the Ministers. The only limit to his power is that

[1] *i.e.* Count Wedel.

which is inherent in a system of personal government, and in any trial of strength between Lucanus and a Minister or provincial Governor, I should confidently advise everybody to back this insignificant old gentleman.

"The real cause of the fall of Wedel was the building at Babelsberg, which I thought perfectly unjustifiable. The Emperor's opinion is based on very personal but very characteristic grounds. He said: 'Wedel tells me over and over again that there is no money when I want to buy anything. Now he asks for millions to build a palace for my son.'

"The Chancellor is playing the oddest game in the Morocco business. He always shows the Emperor newspaper cuttings which tell him how ridiculous the French are making themselves and how they have got the worst of the whole affair. This naturally convinces the Emperor that our policy in Morocco has been the most brilliant success imaginable. The Emperor is completely in the toils of these ideas, and as he has great skill in not allowing people to express any idea that does not please him, the result is that the truth never comes to his ears.

"Even here there are observers with sufficient perception to realise that we have really attained none of the objects proclaimed two years ago with so much rattling of sabres. On the contrary, it is obvious that France, even if she is indulging in adventure now, is only doing what she wanted to do then and what we tried to prevent. Nor can anybody doubt that we have irretrievably compromised ourselves in the eyes of Islam.

"All these views, however, are the exact reverse of the officially accepted opinion. We are horror-struck

if anyone hints that our success in Morocco is open to doubt. Either he is at once energetically converted to the opposite view, or ignored in all conversation for days together. No one who has not seen the adroitness with which we avoid listening to contradiction, can begin to understand why even the boldest find themselves driven to stop short of speaking the truth. One cannot hold all these good people morally quite blameless; but I am forced to the conclusion that real truthfulness transcends the limits of human capacity, because I have never yet seen anybody who, in the conditions which prevail at Court, has navigated this shoal securely. The Emperor can change the subject of conversation whenever he choses: he can always give it a fresh turn or break it off: he has a brilliant and unique personality, but never will he hear opinions contrary to his own, and most of those round him are absolutely dependent on him.

"The Chancellor makes matters worse by his pliability and I find that he goes even further. Politics at home are in the worst possible muddle; and as for foreign policy, we have a kind of Olmütz in Morocco, although relatively we have never had so strong an Army and Fleet or such feeble opponents. But what can one expect from a Chancellor like Bülow?

"One day the Emperor said to him on the *Hohenzollern*: 'Your light trousers are enough to upset the best weather forecast,' and he immediately retired to his cabin and put on a darker pair. At other moments he scribbles notes on his shirt cuffs, for fear of forgetting the least of His Majesty's wishes. Whenever by any oversight he expresses in conversation an opinion in direct disagreement with that of the Emperor, he remains silent for a few minutes, and then says the

exact contrary of what he said before, with the preface : 'As your Majesty so wisely remarked just now, the matter stands so and so.' The policy of a Chancellor who can do such things, must, for all his brilliant gifts, and in spite of the inexhaustible resources of the country, be the worst in the world. I fear history will condemn him.

"Please return me this letter. Hearty greetings,

Your loving son,

Rob."

26th November 1907.

Now that the Harden-Eulenburg scandal is at last over, people are beginning to realise that we have made hopeless fools of ourselves. In my opinion our handling of the whole business could not have been more unwise or damaging. I should not hesitate to say that if anybody had offered a prize for the clumsiest way of settling the affair, and the one most likely to impair the prestige of the Royal House, the Court and the Army, it would have been bound to be given to those responsible for the result actually achieved. No one could have imagined how much the Emperor is upset by the whole affair. He followed the reports of the trial in detail, and for the first time heard things which had till then been concealed from him. As a rule he goes out of his way to avoid learning the truth when he feels that it might be unpleasant, but this time he was really interested in hearing everything. For the moment the effect is almost entirely satisfactory, for the whole business has so worn him out, that one day he really thought of giving up his trip to England and telegraphed to that effect to King Edward. As is inevitable in a man of his

temperament, he is driven by his mood of the moment from one extreme to another. There are moments when he is very much depressed, feeling that the entire affair is a terrible exposure, and that he has been seriously compromised. The next minute, when he feels kindly to Prince Eulenburg, Count Hohenau, and Count von Moltke, he conceives the fantastic idea that they must have a rehabilitation—in his own words—"such as there never has been before." Then again, when he is exasperated by a newspaper article, he thinks seriously that he must demand personal satisfaction, and says with the fullest conviction: "If this sort of thing in the Press goes on, I shall send an equerry and have an editor shot." In short he has lost his nerve. . . .

I spent a long time talking with Admiral von Hollman about Krupp, whom he had known very well for many years. Hollmann was decidedly of the opinion that Krupp was never actually vicious, . . . but his utter recklessness was astonishing . . . In the end, when he was involved in difficulties by his own folly, and abominable trumped-up charges were brought against him, he was completely overwhelmed, and beside himself with indignation at the ingratitude and wickedness of mankind. He always suffered from insomnia and had to use strong sleeping draughts. The probability is that he accidentally took an overdose with fatal results; but it is not at all impossible that despair at the situation drove him to seek his own end.

The Emperor could have been protected from such scandals and saved from this dangerous trial, had he, at the right time, been clearly warned of the risks of friendship with men of this temperament; and that, so far as political consequences went, the question of their actual guilt or innocence was of no importance. . . .

The Emperor was so greatly incensed a little time ago by an article in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung*, that he spoke about it to the Chancellor, and insisted that proceedings for *lèse majesté* should be taken. This was very trying for Bülow. He endeavoured to evade the question, but with all his cleverness he could not succeed. It went so far that experienced courtiers began to fear a Chancellor crisis. The good Bülow, however, gave in, and started a prosecution. Then on the 22nd November a telegram appeared in the *Kölnische Volkszeitung* stating that it had received a communication from the Chief Public Prosecutor in Cologne that the prosecution for *lèse majesté* had been abandoned. This is the way in which in the last resort both home and foreign politics are carried on. There are so many sudden ideas and whims, which the Chancellor cannot resist, that he is obliged to try to find some way out at all costs after ostensibly obeying orders. But even his skill is not sufficient to save us from the dangers of such a course.

The whole shipwreck of our Morocco policy is due to these causes; and there are no grounds for the prevalent conception of the dominating influence of the Eulenburg "Round Table" in Liebenberg, and particularly of the Counsellor of the French Embassy, Monsieur Lecomte, in foreign politics. The real facts about the invitation of Monsieur Lecomte to Liebenberg are that the Emperor was anxious to go there for a day and a half last autumn, as he does every year, but had a sudden cold and had to cry off. The cold was a violent one and he was as usual very depressed. Dr. Ilberg tried to persuade him to go after all, and spoke of it as "a little cold." The Emperor suddenly raised himself to his full height, looked at him seriously and said: "A big cold; everything with me is big." Anyhow, the consequence of this

cold was that the shooting at Liebenberg was postponed. After two days the Emperor was a little better, and he suddenly said to Count Eulenburg, the Chief Court Marshal; "I want to go to Phili[1] at Liebenberg the day after to-morrow in the afternoon."

Count Eulenburg immediately got into telegraphic communication with the Prince, and was obliged to report to the Emperor that most of the usual guests had already left, to which the Emperor replied: "Then Phili had better just ask some others." When some names were mentioned to him, the Emperor said: "Phili once said he knew Lecomte very well. Why not ask him?" Count Eulenburg ventured, as he told me himself, greatly daring, to raise a cautious objection, and ask whether it was not a little risky to invite a foreign diplomat to such an intimate circle, but the Emperor replied: "No, no, that does not matter in the least. Tell Phili to invite him."

There is no doubt that the Emperor never knew Lecomte more than quite slightly, and that politics were never discussed with him, even at Liebenberg. The rumours I mentioned are partly untrue and partly exaggerated.

On the other hand, the Marquis de Laguiche, who has never been mentioned in the Press, played a far from unimportant part in the Morocco question. On the occasion of the Review in Döberitz the Emperor said to him: "I have not the least intention of going to war with France about this Morocco business." As this remark was made at the very moment, when Prince Bülow was trying to intimidate France with threats, the Marquis at once realised the far-reaching importance of what the Emperor had said. But as

[1] *i.e.* Prince Philip zu Eulenburg.

he has all the instincts of a gentleman, he asked the Emperor whether he might be permitted to make use of this communication, or was to consider it as confidential. The Emperor immediately replied: "You may use it."

At that moment the relations between the Emperor and the Chancellor were not so harmonious as Bülow by his invariable compliance always tried to keep them, and the Emperor not only interfered with his plans by unexpected commands, but often did not even condescend to inform him of the changes in his All-Highest opinions. Probably he was not even himself conscious of any such changes, and merely pursued policies of his own, but unfortunately in directions quite contrary to those of his Government.

The fall of Caprivi has often been ascribed to Prince Eulenburg, but this only proves how apt the world was to overrate his influence. There was a certain amount of friction at that moment between Caprivi and Count Botho Eulenburg, the Minister of the Interior. On the very day of a hunt at Liebenberg, Caprivi had inspired an article in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, very violently attacking Count Botho. In consequence of this article, the latter thought the differences between himself and Caprivi had reached such a pitch that they could no longer usefully work together. Now on that particular day Count Botho Eulenburg had been asked to dinner at Liebenberg after the Imperial hunt, and took the opportunity of telling His Majesty, who was conversing with him, what he felt. The Emperor did not even come to a decision at Liebenberg, but postponed it till his return to Berlin. Then, after speaking to the Chancellor, he decided, not that either of them should give way to the

other, but that in view of the political situation and the interests of the State the only possibility was to dismiss Caprivi and Botho Eulenburg together.

If Prince Philip Eulenburg had only had a tithe of the influence with which he is so commonly credited, we should long ago have been landed in inconceivable difficulties and catastrophes. He is a very amiable *grand seigneur* with very courteous and pleasant manners, but so full of mystical fancies that I cannot understand how he can ever be taken seriously. He never was either ambitious or industrious, and is now really suffering from nerves. His one aim and object has always been to be a friend of the Emperor. In that he certainly succeeded to a very high degree, for with his charming manners and his witty and humorous stories he had insinuated himself into a very warm corner in the Emperor's heart.

In virtue of this friendship he undoubtedly had a remarkable influence on the Emperor in certain moments and many precipitate, fantastic and mystical notions and resolutions may be attributed to him. But calculation and forethought had nothing to do with this influence, which developed quite spontaneously out of the characters of the Emperor and the Prince. . . .

All wise men, many influential writers, even "able editors" are rightly demanding in times like these that men of independence should occupy positions of trust in the neighbourhood of His Majesty. Theoretically, I say, they are perfectly right, but in practice unfortunately we have no men who will do their duty unselfishly and who are ready at any moment to risk everything for their convictions. It is hardly possible to find them in the circumstances of to-day. No doubt they do exist somewhere. But when one must ask,

as I have already explained, when an important confidential post has to be filled before anything else: "How will he get on with His Majesty?" and when the question how far he will be able to meet the claims of his position is only a secondary consideration, then independent men will not be found for such posts.

Nevertheless, we do see a few isolated persons of the right stamp. One may well ask, "Why do they not then show themselves to be men, and why do they not dominate all the others by the power of their personalities?" The Emperor has a very subtle instinct for men of this type. He does not let them trouble him long, but soon puts them on the shelf. They never gain influence. They quickly begin to feel uncomfortable in their places and in the atmosphere they breathe, and the result is sure to be, sooner or later, that they are found to have achieved nothing.

No one has succeeded in impressing his personality permanently on the Emperor; no one has ever established a lasting strong influence on him. Prince Bülow, Prince Eulenburg, and the Chief Court Marshal, Count August Eulenburg, are only apparent exceptions. They are in the truest sense of the word only his tools, for in the last instance the Emperor commands, and without a word they do nothing but what he wants.

I admit that by their tact they prevent a great deal and remedy a good many mistakes. But to argue for their own convictions at a decisive moment, when serious things are afoot, is what they never do. They wisely yield and then try to save what they can from the wreck.

Count Hülsen-Haeseler, Chief of the Imperial Cabinet, often poses as if he were the one exception. That is not a fact. All that he can manage by his dry nimble

wit, and on the strength of the long time during which he has enjoyed the Emperor's favour, is to allow himself to go to further lengths than perhaps anyone else dares. But when things become serious he says: "As your Majesty commands," just as all the others do. If he were really a man of any independence, why did he not dare sooner to enlighten the Emperor at the time of the Hohenau-Moltke scandals, which any Lieutenant could see, were bound to be the outcome of the attack in the *Zukunft*? He did not dare to because he is not accustomed to run any risk for the sake of his own convictions in any really serious matter.

He knows the Emperor from painful experience. There would no doubt have been a wild outburst, and it is quite impossible to say what would have happened to anyone who came with any such news. The Emperor's ideas are often so amazingly unworldly; and he would have insisted on proofs—which did not exist. So the consequence for Count Hülsen might very well have been the loss of his position, a duel or a prosecution for slander. If the Emperor only conducted his business more calmly and objectively, the information would perhaps have been given to him. That Count Hülsen did not give it, is, in the present circumstances, quite inexcusable, but at the same time intelligible enough.

One of the few who managed to hold their own against the Emperor and who certainly expressed his opinions without hesitation was St. Paul, the Chief Forester of Rominten, who died last year. He was an upright old man, who expressed his own opinions in the presence of the Emperor in all cases. But the Emperor soon found out that he was getting a little bit elderly and that he was fond of contradicting and indulged in paradoxes,

as old men are apt to do, through their obstinacy or the desire to appear original. Having discovered this with his natural shrewdness, the Emperor frequently made St. Paul the butt of his ridicule and very cleverly treated him as if he were merely a figure of fun.

On the other hand a very important part is now played in Rominten by the Chief Forester, Speck von Sternburg. He is a man of considerable ability, but, in order to make himself agreeable to the Emperor, he has destroyed the natural features of the Rominten Domain. He has cleverly created meadows, which are easily accessible by footpaths on every side, and erected elevated shooting platforms, wherever he thought necessary, which give ample chances of easy shots. From the sportsman's point of view it is lamentable that Rominten should have been gradually reduced to the likeness of a commonplace enclosed park, where formerly we had impenetrable marshes and thickets, and a virgin deer forest of about 130,000 acres. And it is not only by the making of the meadows, but by the lure of plentiful artificial feeding, that Sternburg has attracted the good stags to the places in which they can be easily approached and shot.

An unfortunate result has been that the Emperor has become less and less of a deer-stalker and more and more simply a good shot. He is as a matter of fact an exceptionally good marksman, but only when the quarry is brought up to his rifle.

To obtain the money he wanted, Herr von Sternburg has found ways of making willing tools of all the superiors with whom he has to deal. As the Domain belongs to the State, the authorities ought to consider the interests of the Exchequer; but they are constantly on the horns of a dilemma, whenever he

asks for funds. I have seen them all, up to the Head Forester of the Province, and even the Minister of Agriculture, faced with this delicate problem and in serious tribulation, but in the end they have always been obliged to put the interests of the Exchequer into the background. The Domain, which as a State Forest ought to yield the largest possible revenue, has simply become a deer forest for the diversion of the Emperor, in which sport is the first consideration, and every conceivable expense is permitted. The Emperor indeed talks of : "*My* stags, *my* Domain," quite forgetting that the Domain does not belong to him, but to the Exchequer, and should be administered on sound principles of forestry and finance. He is generally quite uncompromising in his opinions on the questions of *meum* and *tuum*, but sometimes ignores the distinction in the most amazing way, where he himself is concerned.

I ought to add, in regard to Herr von Sternburg, that I consider him a first-class expert in forestry, a very good sportsman and a pleasant and amiable man.

In the Schorfheide, that is to say in Hubertusstock, the Chief Forester, von Hövel, occupies a position equivalent to that of Sternburg in Rominten. His conversation is witty, if sometimes coarse, and thus attracts the Emperor even more than that of Sternburg. He also is clever enough to make a great impression on him by his oak plantations and other improvements. But he has won the Emperor's good graces also by his sportsmanship, and has also succeeded in making all his superiors subservient to his purposes.

Of the same type, curiously enough, is von Etzdorff who is in a position of equal importance at Kadinen. He has an extraordinary knack of anticipating all the wishes of the Emperor ; and he carries them into practice

The Author in later life on his Estate in Silesia.

in his farming, and then asserts that the Emperor has a model farm. I will not say anything of the social discontent stirred up by numberless petty regulations which bear very hardly on the employees; nor of the unfair competition of the Kadinen Brick Works—which in spite of their subsidy lose a good deal of money every year—with private undertakings, which must be made to pay but it is unpardonable that he ingratiates himself so with the Emperor and fills his mind with completely false notions of agriculture and its possibilities.

As a result of this the Emperor perpetually says: "I often wonder how little employers in the country do for their workers. Why do they not build houses like mine in Kadinen; then the workmen would remain with them, and not emigrate westwards." Etzdorff never explains to the Emperor that if everything were calculated on a commercial basis and the rents fixed at a price yielding a fair return on capital, a tenant's expenses would be as high as those of a Regierungsrath living in Berlin.

As a matter of fact everything in Kadinen is merely amateurish, but Etzdorff persuades the Emperor that it is a model administration, and is now beginning to yield an excellent return. It is true that Kadinen was a gift to the Emperor, but up to the present about £150,000 has been sunk in it. Leaving out of account altogether the industries carried on there, which still have to be heavily subsidised, and the expenditure for building, etc., it has yielded in the last few years an average of £2000. In other words it is commercially a loss, and although a gift, it will never give a fair return on the capital invested.

The administration of Kadinen is under the control of the Civil Cabinet, and the subsidies come from the

private purse. Old Lucanus, and Regierungsrath von Eisenhart, groan over the whole business, but they know perfectly well that nothing can be done against Etzdorff, and they carefully avoid opposing him. Even the Empress, who spends a good deal of time at Kadinen every summer, sees through Etzdorff's way of humbugging the Emperor. She thinks it unconscionable, but though she makes a point of showing him her disfavour, she has never succeeded in opening the Emperor's eyes.

Another favourite, here in Berlin, is Herr von Hülsen, who exploits the Emperor's weakness for external show, and scenic display, and figures in his mind as the admirable, indeed the only possible, director of the Royal Theatres. But setting aside the question of production, it must be admitted that one can see much better acting on many other Berlin stages than in the Royal Theatre. When it is a question of the subsidies no Minister of the Household can stand in von Hülsen's way, and the manner in which he represents the affairs of other theatres or his own to the Emperor often amazes the casual listener. One day discussing these things with Lyncker I said almost as though thinking aloud: "It is extraordinary that in every department the Emperor must have someone about him who deceives him." Lyncker told me next day that he had reported this to Count Eulenburg, who was laid up with a broken arm, The Count, he said, shook with laughter at my remark and said: "It takes someone who knows our circumstances from top to bottom to understand how perfectly true that is."

Ballin, the manager of the Hamburg-America Line, a man of remarkable capacity, Professor Slaby of the

Technical High School, and last not least Admiral Hollmann may also be mentioned among the favourites. Taking into account their different walks of life all present more or less the same characteristics. The same conditions which make it impossible for a man of independence to hold his own with the Emperor, render it all the easier for most accommodating natures; which is why inferior minds are so often successful with him. He has a passion for monologue and good listeners; and those who allow him to do all the talking escape the risk of compromising themselves. Once he finds them sympathetic, they will rise step by step in his favour. By dint of much anxious listening these men get to know what the Emperor thinks about matters outside their own special departments, and acquire the art of letting fall in the middle of a conversation remarks which are apparently casual, but are really an echo of His Majesty's opinions.

18*th December*, 1907.

On his return from England the Emperor spoke very excitedly about the Harden trial. He is particularly hurt by the open way in which the question is being discussed in the Reichstag, and reproached the Chancellor with want of energy and skill in not preventing this publicity. In spite of all his arts von Bulow's chances of remaining in office seem to be slight, though so consummate is his adroitness, that he hardly ever fails to find a way out. The Emperor let us see the other day how deep is his resentment at the attitude of the representatives of the people. One day he suddenly broke off a conversation, and as he was going away he said almost to himself but loud enough for

most of us to understand: "And these are the ragtag and bob-tail which want to rule. They are absolutely not ripe for a constitution."

The Emperor's plan of rehabilitating Prince Eulenburg and Count von Moltke has taken shape. Even in the earliest stages I did not believe that he would let it drop, and now I am convinced that he will carry it through. From the human point of view, it is intelligible that he should want this rehabilitation, but as a matter of policy it seems to me the most mischievous of all the mistakes and errors already committed in connection with these scandals.

The Emperor was furious too about General von Bissing's Order [1] to his Army Corps. Von Bissing has certainly taken the wrong road. He was always excitable, but now he has lost his nerve entirely.

He has now been asked to send in his papers. Thereupon von Bissing wrote to the Emperor, asking his pardon in humble terms and begging him to alter his decision. He failed, and so the order of dismissal stood. The whole thing has therefore been settled in the proper form.

Speaking to the Emperor on the subject, the Adjutant, von Neumann said: "We all had expected that Your Majesty would have sent General von Bissing to prison." To which the reply was: "Von Bissing is such a lunatic. If I had punished him with arrest, he would probably have shot himself." I could not help thinking of what people used to say: "The only things the Emperor fears are the tears of his wife and the rudeness of Bissing." On the whole the troubles of the

[1] An Army Order issued by von Bissing on learning that the Kaiser's consent to his retaining his position as Corps Commander had been withheld.—*Author's Note.*

last few months have done the Emperor good, though the effect has been somewhat diminished by the byzantinism of the Court. Still, he has for once heard some home truths.

The development of the Kaiser's character cannot be understood unless we realise the unexampled good fortune which has attended him all his life long. For most of his actions which challenge criticism the boundless subservience which surrounds him is responsible. When things go less well with him, it is at once noticeable how much more of a real man he becomes. No one can of course foresee whether he will keep his nerve in a critical hour of political conflagration and ferment; but it may, I think, be said with some confidence even now, that his magnificent gifts will only show themselves fully in a really crucial moment. He has been too lucky in his life. Not only has all he had to do been made too easy for him, but everything he wanted has positively fallen into his lap, and he has been surrounded by a servility which leaves its mark everywhere. Much of this would vanish if, in an hour of danger, the Emperor were to be really brought into peril. Then he would see that nothing could be more ruinous both to himself and the development of the people than his delusion that it is still possible nowadays to coquet with absolutism. Should a time return, such as we have known in the past, when we must look for salvation to men of a liberal independence, and the Emperor has to pay regard to honest conviction, he too would be converted to more progressive opinions.

CHAPTER X

SIGNS AND TOKENS

8th January 1908.

THE Harden-Moltke trial is at last over. Its evil consequences will no doubt last for a long time, and the good it may do seems to me problematical. Even though the country is for the moment reconciled to its result, an immense amount of mud has been stirred up in the highest society, and no one can fail to see that a comparison between the vastly different ways in which the first and second trials were conducted throws a most unfavourable light on the administration of justice. The Emperor was delighted at the issue of the second part of the trial and would have liked best of all to have prepared a rehabilitation of Eulenburg and Moltke—he spoke, as I have already recalled, of "a rehabilitation such as there never was." All the same, those who warned him against running any risk of involving "the person of the All Highest" have so far been justified. Field Marshal Hahnke and some others went so far as to say that a military Court of Honour must now decide whether or not Count Moltke's honour is untarnished. The nation, however, would surely find such a Court of Honour inexplicable, considering that the trial, though it showed Count Moltke to be very weak and a good deal to be commiserated, nevertheless proved him also to be perfectly estimable. These Courts of Honour have often ended in absurdity, and the same thing would

probably have happened again in this case. On the other hand, I find it a very good thing that the Emperor has not entangled himself further by a too ostentatious rehabilitation.

15th January 1908.

There is a good deal of excitement about the presence of the Emperor, without any real reason, at the wedding of Fräulein Staudt with Lieutenant von Kummer. Admiral Müller told us the other day that when the son of Field Marshal Hahnke was marrying the daughter of Count Schlieffen, Chief of the General Staff, the Emperor, when asked whether he would not show some kind of interest in the wedding, answered: "What do I care about the children of the Chief Adjutant." In the case of the Staudt wedding he was interested because, like many absolute rulers, he likes to meddle in the personal affairs of his subjects, and was convinced in this case that he was personally responsible for the match.

16th January 1908.

Herr Weinberg, the owner of racehorses in Frankfort, has at last succeeded after many futile efforts, in getting his patent of nobility. I was discussing the matter with Herr von Eisenhart, representative of the Civil Cabinet. He said that the Emperor wished this patent to be granted and that some unknown person had got him interested in Weinberg. He added: "Much as we regretted it, we could do nothing against the wish which His Majesty had expressed in very decided terms." He went on to say that he was filled with respectful admiration of his chief (Lucanus). "He has come," he said, "out of the business magnificently. I was utterly

at my wits' end, and was trying to discover some way of calling the Emperor's attention to the objections we still felt, and wondering whether it was not possible to prevent Weinberg's elevation, even though it was his Majesty's own wish. In the meantime, Lucanus, with his marvellous suppleness, had made the Emperor's idea his own and said to me: 'Then we will just whitewash him by this patent of nobility.'"

17*th January* 1908.

The Franchise demonstrations of the last few days have certainly had an effect, but not that of making us reflect whether after all some of our antiquated laws ought not to be reformed. The result has merely been to set some of us talking perpetually and asking ourselves what degree of force should have been used. When we were talking about the thirty odd people who had been injured, the Emperor said: "I am very pleased at the attitude of the police, but the next time they will have to set about them with the sharp edge of the sword and not with the flat."

18*th January* 1908.

Prince Bülow's declaration in the House of Representatives on the 10th that universal, direct, and secret suffrage was out of the question, was not only undiplomatic and illogical, but a direct challenge. Our home policy has resulted in confusion and discontent beyond all expectation, just as Bülow's foreign policy has had disastrous results by increasing the isolation of Germany and exposing us to heavy moral defeat in the Morocco affair.

This declaration in favour of a sharp breach with the

Centre, and of a policy of coalition with the Liberals; the offence given to the latter by the declaration in the House of Representatives; and the drastic measures against the Poles in the expropriation question can only be explained by his personal relations with the Emperor. He has for a long time felt himself so insecure that in spite of his cleverness, he grows daily more afraid of trying to prevent anything.

It is now fully eighteen months since he could have said with truth, as he did say once long ago, when somebody reproached him with giving way too much: "Ah, if you only knew how much I have prevented!"

The true state of the case is something like this. The Emperor has heard incautious remarks about the insolence and the excesses in which the Centre, emboldened by the dominating position which it has occupied for so many years, has indulged. It has also come to his ears that the party's political morality is not above reproach. He was in consequence roused to the highest pitch of virtuous indignation, and ordered Bülow to settle his accounts with the Centre, and break with it. Bülow found no opportunity of pointing out the far-reaching consequences, and obeyed. At the same time he received orders to conciliate the Liberals and to continue to govern with their co-operation. Once again Bülow had no chance to warn him of the results, and once again agreed.

If he really wanted to rule with the Liberals he should have realised that they would not be content in the long run simply to agree with everything, but would want definite concessions for themselves. Instead of this the Emperor bluntly ordered their chief demand, the reform of the three electoral classes, to be rejected without further words. Bülow has just

executed this order, and naturally we have friction with the Liberals. The curious thing is that the Emperor while he cannot fail to recognise that his policy at home and abroad has often been unfortunate, in his heart of hearts lays the whole blame on Bülow.

Bülow knows this well enough, and in my opinion the weakening of his influence, which renders him less than ever able to "prevent anything" is largely due to it. For some time past Bülow has been feeling this so strongly, that he probably no longer clings to his position as he did formerly. But he would like to make a good exit.

One result of the Franchise Demonstration is that we have been feeding and lodging about ten police officials and 150 policemen in the Castle, which has quite a war-time look about it. The Emperor said again and again to his Adjutant: "If I had known last Sunday that the disorders were so serious, I should have alarmed the Alexander Regiment and cleared the streets with it myself. If such a thing happens again, I insist on being informed of every detail, so as to act without delay." I heard a similar conversation before the meeting of the Chapter of the Black Eagle. General von Kessel said to some of the equerries: "For Heaven's sake, gentlemen, do prevent the Emperor from starting out suddenly with a body of soldiers. No one can foresee what would happen, and it would disturb all our arrangements. Everything is in readiness, and if His Majesty telegraphs to the Supreme Command that this or that street is to be cleared, we shall do it very well, but please don't encourage any sudden measures." They all agreed. Only von Senden, one of the equerries, made the surprising remark, "This is not meant to be taken so

seriously, your Excellency. The Emperor only talks like this; in the end he does nothing . . ."

Not long ago Prince Bülow spoke to my father about Herr Goldschmidt-Rothschild, who has recently been admitted to the Diplomatic Service. "Now," he said, "we have got this delightful and hard-working young fellow in our Diplomatic Service. I have sent him to London, and he gets always the best of information. But in Germany he cannot get a commission in the Reserve." The Prince was quite right, it is a glaring case; but if it is suggested to our military Chauvinists that a Jew may be an officer of the Reserve, they see red; and yet there have been many Jewish officers who fought with distinction before the enemy in time of war. But the most reactionary Chauvinism has the last word with us to-day.

While he was still Governor of Hesse-Nassau, my father tried to use his influence to secure a commission in the Reserve for this same young Goldschmidt-Rothschild, as he was one of the last representatives of the house of Rothschild in Germany, and because he is a highly gifted, ambitious, well-educated, and good-looking man of charming manners. The fact that he did not change his religion is only a proof of strength of character, both on his part and on that of his family. To use this fact as an argument against his being gazetted, considering how many recently baptised Jews have become officers, is to put a premium on lack of conviction.

My father is certainly a strong Conservative, but in this Jewish question he cannot close his eyes to the fact that our policy with regard to it is not only narrow-minded and unjust, but demoralising. We are injuring ourselves by gradually forcing some of the best, most

enterprising, and wealthiest families out of the country, and are courting danger by driving the Jews into opposition. It is surely obvious that, so long as the Jews can only hope for real improvement of their position from a moral or actual defeat of the Government, if not of the country, their interest must, within limits, lie in our discomfiture. No sound Conservative, it seems to me, who really desires the welfare of the State, can ignore such considerations as these, but I am astonished every day how seldom I find in anyone among my acquaintances the faintest inkling of them.

25th January 1908.

Last Monday, the 20th, we undertook a most mysterious journey. The Emperor wanted to surprise Prince Adalbert at a Ball he was giving at the Imperial Yacht Club in Kiel. For this purpose the railway authorities were informed that the special Royal Train was to make a trial trip from Potsdam, where it is stationed, by way of Nauen, Hagenau and Plön to Eutin. In order to attract as little attention as possible General von Plessen, Dr. Niedtner, and I, as well as the kitchen staff, the servants and the luggage, boarded the train in the shunting yards in Potsdam. At Nauen the Emperor appeared quite unexpectedly in his car, and got into the train. The only persons in the suite besides those already mentioned were two Adjutants, Admiral Ingenohl and Captain von Rebeur. Everybody in Berlin believed that the Emperor was only taking his usual morning ride in the car. I told the station master at Nauen, that he was absolutely responsible for seeing that no telegram was despatched from his station containing the news that the Emperor had taken the train there.

When we arrived at Plön at five o'clock in the afternoon, it was already dark, but all the same I impressed again on the station master, that it was his business to see that no telegram was sent announcing the arrival of His Majesty. As a matter of fact the station had received no news of his presence. Shortly before that, Prince Henry had appeared at the station with seven cars, and in them we arrived an hour later quite unrecognised at the Castle of Kiel.

Here we completely disguised ourselves in masks and dominos, and arrived at the Ball at half-past seven. The Emperor drove in the first car with Prince and Princess Henry, who were also masked, and for a long time nobody in the crowd recognised his Majesty. As the company was in costume and not in masks, these figures naturally attracted a good deal of attention, and as nobody thought they might be guests from Kiel, the general impression was that it was the Prince's brothers, who were attending Prince Adalbert's Ball in this disguise as a joke. The Crown Prince was also expected, but he had been accidentally delayed; and so it happened that some ladies, who were addressed by the Emperor, thought that it was the Crown Prince and made a few remarks about his figure, which they said had been somewhat spoilt by his disguise. They wanted to pay a compliment, but succeeded in doing just the reverse.

The Emperor was indescribably amused over these little pleasantries, and when Countess Platen (*née* Countess Stolberg) told him straight out after a good deal of chaff that she thought it was the Crown Prince, the Emperor suddenly took off his mask to frighten her. There was universal astonishment and great delight at his unexpected presence.

Then Prince Henry signaled the command to fire the Imperial salute to the Fleet anchored in the harbour, and the command was obeyed thirty-two minutes after it was issued.

Immediately after our return from Kiel, there was a great Ball at the Castle in Berlin at which Prince Joachim Albert of Prussia, who had been sent away for a year to the Campaign in South-West Africa as a punishment, made his reappearance. The Empress did not give him her hand when she greeted him, whereas she did so to all the other Princes standing near; but only made him a distant bow. It is really somewhat hard on a young kinsman who has just returned from a campaign. The truth is that on points of morality our views are not only strict but singular.

20th March 1908.

A few days ago Prince Joachim Albert was retired without permission to wear his uniform. The majority of reasonable people find this not only harsh, but almost incredible. He is accused of adultery, for the lady with whom he is still living has in fact gone through a fictitious ceremony of marriage with a certain Baron ——, who has come down in the world, for the sake of being able to bear his name. But, as she never lived with ——, and as he only made difficulties about a divorce for the purpose of blackmail, the accusation of adultery seems absolutely unreasonable. An attempt was made to induce the Prince to place himself officially under a sort of guardianship. On the advice of his lawyer, Justizrat Krause, he has refused, and this was the reason of his being retired "without uniform." The Prince said, not without good ground: "What

have I really done that I should declare myself a lunatic ? "

The consequence of this retirement will be that the Prince will be removed further and further from his family and reputable society, and will only be driven more into the arms of the lady, and doubtful company of all kinds which will drag him down further morally, exploit, and cheat him. I deeply regret this resolution for which I hold the Chief of the Military Cabinet primarily responsible.

In his intimate circle the Emperor said : " I must act sternly in matters of morals against members of my own family. I must give exemplary warnings to my sons." This system of morality which bids a man ruin others in order to safeguard the virtue of his own sons does not appeal to me.

24th June 1908.

. . . History, particularly that of Brandenburg, might have taught us that more than once the pietism, hypocrisy, and fanatical virtue of the Pharisee have brought unjust condemnation and disaster on many, with no other result than a greater corruption of morals than before.

Many efforts have been made in the last two decades to suppress excessive luxury, especially among officers. In spite of all the speeches of warning and Cabinet Orders, everything has only become more luxurious still. Everybody remembers the Order,[1] which was issued about fifteen years ago, countersigned by General Hahnke, that no officer should receive an allowance from home of more than a certain amount, which was fixed at £6 per month for the officers of Cavalry of the

[1] See p. 62. (End of entry Feb. 22, 1904.)

Guard. I should be very glad to see the officer in the Cavalry of the Guard who was able to get along with less than £20. As a matter of fact the average allowance is £30 a month.

Then, a great effort was made to suppress the wearing of mufti by officers. The Emperor himself has often arrested officers for this offence. To-day it is believed in the highest quarters that the wearing of mufti by officers has, like their excessive luxury, been abolished. As a matter of fact, officers wear mufti more than ever.

Similar efforts were made to suppress gambling among officers.[1] It is characteristic of our official hypocrisy to imagine that such gambling has been abolished, but in spite of all the many scandals connected with high play, as for instance the trial of the "Harmless," the numberless dismissals of superior officers responsible, the many reprimands, punishments, and warnings, even from the highest quarters, have availed nothing. There is more gambling than ever, but it is less open and therefore more pernicious. Ask any young officer how things are in this respect in the manœuvre camps, and remember that about a year ago General von Parkisch, the Commander of the Riding School in Hanover, was injudicious enough to ask his officers if they gambled, with the devastating result that two-thirds of the whole body of officers reported themselves as guilty!

* * *

Some days ago we had a conference with Major von K. of the Head Quarters Staff, about the manœuvres. I gathered the information that in future a Company of the Pioneers of the Guard is always to be present at

[1] See p. 141.

the Imperial Manœuvres, which this year are in Alsace. The reason was that last year the boiler in the bath-room of the Emperor's quarters was not in order. Why did not the Chief of the General Staff tell His Majesty that the fault was not that of the Pioneers, who had put up the hut, but that the boiler had simply got out of order because the man who had to look after it had overheated it. It is incredible that when such an incident is followed by an All-highest Order, no one should suggest what prejudice the service might suffer from bringing a Company of Pioneers of the Guard to the Imperial Manœuvres every time. Imagine the cost of transporting it from Berlin. A little incident like this suggests many reflections, and unfortunately they are none of them pleasant.

* * *

On the 29th of last month the usual field days of the Second Brigade of the Infantry of the Guard took place in the presence of the Emperor at Döberitz. At the end of the exercises he gave a rather long address, in the course of which he said, referring to the interview in Reval, "I am well aware that efforts are being made to encircle Germany, but the German has never fought better than when he was attacked on all sides; let them all come." Several of those who returned from the manœuvres were much exercised by these utterances, and they were particularly uneasy because General Tatichev, who was attached to the person of His Majesty, naturally heard every word. Strangely enough nothing was said about it at first, but after about eight days allusions to the speech cropped up in the Press. The paper spoke of nervousness in high quarters, and the extraordinary conflict of opinion

between the Emperor and the Foreign Office was hinted at. It was said that the latter had been trying for some time past to allay public anxiety, but now these words, coming from such a source had exactly the contrary effect. However, the Emperor on being informed that his speech had given great offence to the Czar, promptly convinced himself that he had said nothing of the kind, and instructed the Chancellor to issue a *démenti*. This was very uncomfortable for the latter, who at first tried to evade it; but finally published the *démenti* in the *Norddeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* of the 19th July. It is very regrettable that the Chancellor should thus be called on to deny an indiscretion, which naturally is not concealed from the ministries of other countries; but to my mind it is still worse that a neighbouring power should be able to draw the conclusion that the incident has ended in a moral defeat for us.

26th November 1908.

Two days ago Schulz, the Emperor's body servant, dashed into the equerries' room in great agitation, and said that His Majesty had ordered him to call the Chancellor to the telephone immediately and to speak to him personally. He wished to inform the Chancellor that his All-highest nerves had had such a series of severe shocks through recent incidents, that he was compelled to retire from all affairs, and hand over the Government to the Crown Prince. We managed to calm Herr Schulz, and told him that he could not possibly execute this order, which he finally saw for himself. Then we telephoned to Count Eulenburg, who, after being told all the circumstances, conferred

with the Emperor, the Chancellor, and the Cabinet, and calm was restored.

It appeared that, when he was hunting in Donaueschingen, the Emperor burst into a violent fit of weeping after a conversation with Prince Fürstenberg. We were a good deal hurt to think that in times like these, when he is surrounded by old and proved counsellors, he should discuss the things which are nearest to his heart with Prince Fürstenberg, who is after all half a foreigner.[1]

29th November 1908.

Yesterday while hunting at Springe the Crown Prince had a long conversation with General von Moltke, the Chief of the General Staff, about the political situation, and committed himself to the opinion that only war can clear up the confused situation of the country. General von Moltke told me that he had represented to the Crown Prince that the time of "Cabinet Wars" was over, and that a war which the German people did not desire or understand, and which therefore aroused no enthusiasm, would be very dangerous. If the nation once thought that a war had been stirred up for frivolous reasons, merely with the object of helping the ruling classes out of their perplexities, it might end with our having to shoot our own subjects.

I am satisfied that General von Moltke did, as a fact, speak as he told me he had done, but I very much

[1] The author tells us in a note that he was referring to the interview which appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* of October 27, 1908. It was an account of a conversation on international politics held at Highcliffe Castle a few weeks previously. The Emperor's remarks on international policy and armaments were so indiscreet that they nearly precipitated a world crisis.

doubt whether the Crown Prince had any clear perception or comprehension of what he meant. He is a vivacious, very pleasant young man with great achievements in sport to his credit, but his character is still quite undeveloped; his mental horizon is narrow and all his chief ideas have the characteristics of extreme youth.

On the occasion of the centenary celebrations of the enfranchisement of the municipalities in the Rathhaus, the Second Burgomaster, Herr Reicher, made an admirable speech about the reforms of Stein. It was very curious that the Emperor seemed to have no inkling how gravely he sins against the very spirit of Stein by his constant personal interference and schoolmastering. He agreed with everything the speaker said, and it honestly delighted him to hear his Ministers with their bureaucratic ideas and their grandmotherly legislation denounced in his presence. It never occurred to him how relentlessly Stein would have condemned our present system of government, which is being attacked violently enough as it is. It is very curious that he, who as a rule is quick enough to understand such things should be so absolutely unsuspecting. His ingenuousness in this respect is a quality which has often helped him to disarm those who would like to tell him the truth. Our heart may always say, "It is a pity," but reason must rest content with the fact that "it is so."

The New Palace, 30th November 1908.

"Dear Father,—As I am very tired after the strain of personal attendance on the Emperor for three weeks, interrupted only by three days in Eckartsau, I cannot do more in answer to your questions than recount a few of the more important recent events.

"On the whole I agree with you that the actual facts have been exaggerated and their importance overestimated. I think, as you do, that the explosion [1] was the climax of a long continued process of fermentation, but the dread of being plunged into incalculable adventures restrained the majority of the nation from further excesses. Be that as it may, the Emperor had not realised how far-reaching the political effects of this publication would be, even when the Press was already in an uproar, and Bülow had tendered his resignation. After that he was extremely depressed, and still had no idea what it all meant, and Bülow and the conduct of affairs at the Foreign Office were the chief objects of his displeasure.

"Before he went to Eckartsau and Donaueschingen and later, those in his immediate surroundings repeatedly tried to persuade him to give up, or at least to curtail, the journey. The chief reason they failed was that at that moment Prince Bülow was anxious to get the Emperor temporarily out of the way. All the same I think personally that even without Bülow's influence he would very probably have persisted in the journey. As a matter of fact even after he had arrived at Donaueschingen, the Emperor had no clear idea of the possible importance of the revelations, or the state of public opinion, and their effect on it. He had discussed the circumstances repeatedly with Bülow, Eulenburg, Hülsen, and others, but everybody, who knows the chief men at Court and the circumstances, must know too that in such conversations, sufficient weight is not attached to any careful and sober review of the situation.

[1] This refers to the "Kaiser crisis" provoked by the *Daily Telegraph* interview, which resulted in Prince Bülow's extracting from the Emperor a promise to make no speeches without first consulting the ministry.

The debate in the Reichstag on the opening day was the first thing that lifted the veil from these illusions. These speeches could not be hidden from the Emperor, who read them, and since then he has suffered from deep depression of spirit. This showed itself very soon by the fact that, as far as I could judge, he ceased to read any more about the matter, and seemed to be seeking for distraction. He used to go for an early morning walk, then breakfasted with us at nine, remained in conversation until half-past eleven, and then went hunting. On returning at about five o'clock, he joined in the general conversation at tea till about seven, when he rested a little. At eight or half-past he appeared again at dinner, and spent the evening with the general company until about half-past twelve.[1] But in spite of everything we did the sense of depression persisted until we returned to Berlin.

The Emperor talks a good deal about exaggeration, ingratitude, and total misapprehension of the whole situation; yet the speeches in the Reichstag have made some impression on him. For his own satisfaction, he has imagined a drama, in which he figures as the greatest martyr of his time. He is keeping Bülow for the present, but cherishes a deep resentment against him. Bülow would have been able to achieve a great deal more if he had fully exploited this period of depression. The nerves of the Emperor are not strong enough to cope with any serious crisis, and in spite of all her strength it is quite possible that Germany may find herself utterly weak and helpless in any grave complication, whether at home or abroad. For the present he has resolved to practise restraint on himself, especially in foreign politics, and he refuses to see any

[1] See p. 261.

diplomatists, except when it is necessary on ceremonial occasions.

"No one can tell how long this will last, but personally I doubt whether things will go on like this for any length of time. Anyone who three months ago heard nearly every day that Count Zeppelin was the biggest fool in Germany, and is now told that he is the greatest German of the century, is prepared for any kind of change. In this matter nothing is so constant as change.

"Good-bye, my dear father, I should be better pleased if I knew nothing about many of the things that I have seen and heard. Anyhow I should often sleep better. With heartiest greetings,

Your loving son,

ROB."

[FROM COUNT ZEDLITZ-TRÜTZSCHLER, SENIOR.]

Breslau, 2nd December 1908.

"DEAR ROB,—What you wrote was only what I expected, all the same it depresses me, whether I consider it from the standpoint of the past, the present, or the future. Everything else when we meet. I shall probably come to Berlin to-morrow evening or Monday morning, and shall stay till Wednesday morning.

FATHER.[1]"

22nd December 1908.

The Emperor is still very depressed, and is not in good health. He still clings to the opinion that he is entirely misunderstood, and the victim of the basest ingratitude, and has been completely left in the lurch

[1] My father was at that time Governor of the Province of Silesia.—*Author's Note.*

(by Bülow and the Government). He only transacts the most indispensable business and only gives audiences when he simply cannot help it. The only paper he reads is the *Korrespondenz Wedekind*.[1]

Recently he came across a passage in it about the Camarilla, and wrote a marginal note: "If no one protects me, I shall have to protect myself." I do not believe that he had any idea at the moment how he would do this, but certainly some act of violence must have been vaguely floating before his imagination. It is difficult to decide whether or not his recent failures have made him more inclined to take the law into his own hands than before. On the whole, I think not, as the recent collapse of his methods seems to have impaired his vigour. Yet he is so much at the mercy of varying impulses, that his fondness for extremes in speech and action may revive at any moment.

Generally speaking, it is just after one of his failures, when his vitality is for the moment at a low ebb, that his advisers, especially the Chancellor, would find it easiest to make an impression. But this time they seem to have had no notion how to turn the opportunity to account, and there are always plenty of people only too anxious to prevent their doing so.

In his heart of hearts the Emperor is much the same as he ever was. He is very fond of telling us how bad everything is in other countries, and how magnificently everything is going on in Germany. Thus the other day he enlarged again in his old style on the approaching bankruptcy of Russia, and on the incredibly insufficient and demoralised administration in that country. This prejudice is of course known to all diplomats, for the Emperor gives them good or bad

[1] A weekly summary of news and opinions published in Berlin.

marks for their reports. On quiet evenings, when he reads such reports in the presence of the ladies and the equerries, he likes best those which are written in a lighter vein, and depreciate or ridicule everything foreign, and he even writes in the margin, "Very good," or "Very true," etc. But if he comes across anything that may possibly suggest an inference not in Germany's favour, or anything distasteful to himself, he writes: "How foolish," or something like that. It is easy to see that the whole Diplomatic Service is gradually being trained to report only what will win good marks in the highest quarters, and to omit what might not be approved of.

There is no doubt that Bülow encouraged this. He only allowed such reports to be submitted as seemed opportune. Herr von Flotow, who was the Chancellor of the Embassy in Paris during the Morocco business, told me the other day that he was not permitted to write or report how the Morocco affair was really going on, but only what the Foreign Office in Berlin wished him to say. As the Emperor has ordered his Civil Cabinet to show him all the letters from England—which is not the case with those from elsewhere—he has recently seen some extremely rude and ill-tempered ones. But at any rate, in this way he learnt and saw part of the truth, that in England there is a strong feeling against him. For example, some time ago an Englishman wrote that "he would advise the Emperor to give up his position at the head of a people of sixty millions, and to become instead the President of a cricket or football club, which would suit him much better." He actually read those words.

As an illustration of the way things are done in Germany, the Crown Prince used to drill his squadron

in uniforms which were clearly contrary to the Regulations, and he often appeared himself without gloves, and carrying a riding whip; even so admirable a man and regimental commander as Colonel von Richthofen of the *Gardes du Corps* could not succeed in getting him to conform to the rules. On the other hand, to ascribe everything to our want of men of strong personality is overdoing it. Circumstances are often too much for the best men and the strongest characters. But the truth is that they have no real influence; they are not listened to; they are avoided and in the end removed.

But that is not all. Quite lately the Emperor has clearly displayed his faculty of fascinating and influencing men by his mere personality. Laszló, the brilliant painter, has spent about three weeks in the New Palace, for the purpose of painting portraits of the Emperor and Empress. I had many conversations with him, and the impression I gained was that this artist, though in every respect a man of shrewd and independent judgment, was completely under the spell of the Emperor. He looked at the whole condition of the country and the political situation through exactly the same glasses. One might almost have thought it was the Emperor speaking. This was simply the result of conversation during the sittings. One could hardly believe such a thing, if one had not experienced it. Unfortunately the effect of such personal influence is neither substantial nor lasting; Laszló will no doubt before long think quite differently.

But the Emperor lulls himself to sleep more and more in his self-deception, and cherishes illusions about the men over whom his influence was once strong, but has long since waned. The Emperor magnetised even Ballin to an extent that one would have supposed im-

possible, in the case of so brilliant and purely practical a man of affairs. All the unprofitable services and many other things which are to-day a source of difficulty to the Hamburg-America Line, are due to various whims of the Emperor, with which Herr Ballin fell in, because he was under the spell of his personality.

A curious little incident showed how the Emperor fails to grasp the simplest commercial idea. When he decorated Herr von Woltmann, a great horse-dealer, he said to him quite seriously: "You sell your horses to my Master of the Horse far too cheap. You must get better terms out of him, or he will let you in, and you won't do as good business as you might."

One day he said in the presence of one of his own Court Marshals, of somebody else who had been appointed to that position: "How one can be a Court Marshal when one has a chance of being anything else I don't know." Just think how dependent he is on his Marshals, how hard they work for him, and what they manage to do, and what pleasure they must take in their work when he speaks in that strain. Fortunately he cannot be taken too seriously. He is a child and will always remain one—but a child that has power to make everything difficult if not impossible. "Woe to the country that has a child for King!"

24th December 1908.

Not so long ago the Emperor said: "I do not read the Constitution, and I don't know it," and it is quite certain that at this time of day he never will study it. I hope that the country with its wonderful power of endurance will have the strength to overcome such handicaps as this, and that anyone who is about to challenge us to a battle for life and death, will think

twice, before attacking us, of the enormous risks he will run. I pray too, that Germany, without losing courage, will equally avoid all rashness. None the less I can have no doubt that great difficulties and fierce struggles await us. Most of my intelligent friends are good illustrations of the old saying: "At Court one begins by being a patriot, then turns socialist, and ends by being a philosopher."

[From Count Zedlitz-Trützschler, Senior.]

Breslau, 29th December 1908.

"Dear Rob,—Your very interesting letter of the 22nd reminded me of a conversation I had with the Ambassador Schweinitz in Kassel a few months before his death. The constellation you mentioned[1] was just appearing on the horizon, and this experienced diplomatist, with his shrewd knowledge of men, described him almost exactly as you have done, on the strength of your observations over so many years. Full of gifts and skill until it comes to a fight, he is weak when the conflict is upon him. But on one point in my opinion you are both deceived. It is certain that men who had not said; "Yes, of course," or "As Your Majesty so rightly remarked," would have been done for in a very short time, and would have made themselves so impossible that nothing could have been achieved in this way. It is at any rate something for which we should be thankful, that the coach has been saved from falling over the precipice so long, and has been steered clear of the edge.

Father."

[1] von Bülow.

30th December 1908.

A few days ago came the report from Herr Dernburg, the Secretary for the Colonies, that a big diamond field had been discovered in South-West Africa. The Emperor said that it was forty kilometres long and two broad. We were given a good many statistics, and details. We thus had an excellent opportunity of seeing what effect the first favourable piece of news had on him after his fit of depression. Quite apart from the fact that he could now talk of nothing else, and that each time he told the story the figures and his fantastic hopes rose, it gave him a chance of expressing his contempt of the Reichstag. "Only a fortnight ago these idiots, when they first heard the news, said that the whole thing was impossible, and now we see what nonsense these Dogberrys talk." "That is what such people are like, if a leader does not drive them in the right direction by sheer force, they always want to go the wrong way. And then they fling mud at the man whose ideas they do not understand, and without whom they cannot get on at all, and pursue him with envy and malice." He continued in the same strain, and all this in front of the ladies and gentlemen who happened to be at table, the casual guests and even the servants.

Yesterday evening the Emperor discussed the report about the Germans in America, which had just come from the Foreign Office—again at table and in the presence of everyone, including the servants. If only a quarter of what he said were to leak out, the alarm and excitement would at least equal that caused by the interview in the *Daily Telegraph*, and the irritation in America would have been incalculable.

And he has done things still more reckless. He is

accustomed to amuse himself quite innocently, but still childishly, with certain people. I shall never forget how he has for a long time past been treating von Neumann as a sort of clown and Court fool, and he tickles and pinches Lieutenant Commander von H—— each time he sees him until he makes the oddest noises. Strangely enough too von C ——, the equerry, a man of great intelligence and gifts, is another favourite victim of his horse-play. The servants see, if not all, at least a great deal of this. Let us think what would happen if a malicious and spiteful article were to appear about these goings on. Even if it were greatly exaggerated and full of gross misrepresentations, there would be no hope of legal redress, for the facts which would come to light, if a prosecution followed, would be too compromising, even if, in themselves, harmless and childish.

We must all regret that even the Empress has no influence in things like this. She sees well enough—and has even said—how unpleasant and serious she thinks it all, but she has never had any influence on the Emperor in any thing that really matters. He only listens to her in questions of outward religious observances and morality.

How often has the Court paraded its purity, and how much hypocrisy and shallow pretence there is in it all.

It is terrible to have to listen when the Emperor tells us that "he never reads newspapers." He says this in a tone of biting contempt and then goes on: "I don't care a button what these fools write."

I have often reproached myself with having kept silence on these occasions, and I cannot conceal from myself that I have been as weak in this respect as any-

body else. Though I have said things now and again, and have often taken more risks than one has the right to expect from a man in my position, it has never done any good. I have had to pay heavily for every frank remark. Instead of having any effect it has only resulted in bitterness and pin-pricks from the Emperor. None the less I am fully conscious that to carry such passivity too far, human though it be, is inexcusable. In the dead of night I have often been haunted by the words: "Contemptible is the man who knows the truth and tells it not." But when we think how most men in my position are tormented by fools and worried for nothing, and how in the last resort one is made responsible for everything that happens at Court, and how a spoon that falls to the floor or a plate that is broken may expose a Marshal of the Court to the imperial displeasure, it is intelligible that he should not of his own accord provoke a quarrel without good reason.

What happened when the party at Rominten broke up this year, is a good illustration of the difficulty I often have in carrying out my duties. On the last evening, about 9 o'clock, we were standing before the hunting-box when the bag was brought in. Incidentally I asked His Majesty whether Admiral von Hollmann should accompany us to Kadinen, when we left next day at 7.30. The Emperor said: "I don't know whether I am going to Kadinen at all." I was quite speechless when he made this remark so casually, for I had to arrange the catering in the middle of the forest near the Russian frontier, where nothing is to be had, for about twenty guests and one hundred and six servants. The Emperor noticed that I was surprised and added: "I have just heard from Kadinen that there is scarlet fever there." I at once went to Dr.

Niedtner, who was still waiting for an answer from Kadinen. I told him that we must decide at once by telephone, "whether we are going to Kadinen or not, for if it is not settled immediately, I shall simply not be able to make any arrangements." He finally realised this, and I decided that, in order that I might only have a *fait accompli* to deal with, I should report that it would be impossible to go to Kadinen. Now, the Emperor insisted that he wanted to go via Königsberg, to inspect the Castle at Marienburg and to pay a visit to the Hussars in Danzig. When I had fixed the main outline of this journey after consulting the time-table, I submitted the plan about 11 o'clock at night.

All of a sudden the Emperor thought he would like to spend a night in the Castle of Königsberg. "That is quite impossible, Your Majesty," I replied. "How do you mean, impossible?" he said very angrily, for he hated that word. I said: "Even if I were to telegraph immediately, we could not get Your Majesty's beds to Königsberg in time." Then he consented to remain in the train and spend the night somewhere on the railway. The next thing he wanted was to have divine service in Marienburg, a thing which had never happened before. Imagine what all this means in the way of catering, carriages, commanding the presence of the necessary persons, etc. I was at work on the arrangements and telegraphing till early in the morning. Luckily everything went off without any friction or hitch just as if preparations had been made for weeks before. But I had been prepared for the worst, and my nerves felt it.

CHAPTER XI

THE GROWTH OF CAPRICE

2nd January 1909.

EVERYBODY noticed that yesterday at the New Year's Court the Emperor did not shake hands with the Presidents of the Reichstag and the Diet, in the usual way, after they had conveyed the congratulations of both Houses. He did this on his own initiative, and both the Chancellor and Count Eulenburg were much surprised.

As he was leaving, the Chancellor could not find his carriage, and walked up and down with me alone for about a quarter of an hour. The conversation turned on the Emperor's spirits and health, and he quite agreed with me that his habit of carrying on conversation in monologue, usually in the presence of others, at dinner as well as for the whole evening afterwards, was politically most ill advised, and incalculably dangerous, while it was also not without risk to his health. I am sure there is nobody who knows the intimate life of the Court who does not think the same. Yet it seems quite improbable that anyone can effect any change, even a slight modification, in this purely personal habit of the Emperor. If it is impossible in so simple a matter to bring about any improvement, how can one be optimistic about what may happen when it is a question of something really serious ?

Schiemann's[1] article is nothing but coarse flattery. His remark that he cannot understand why Harden was not prosecuted for his article, fell on fruitful soil: "At least there is one man who sees that I have been left in the lurch." Yet the whole thing is only phrase-making. The prosecution of Harden would have led to a trial which might have dragged on for years. Much dirty linen would have been washed in public again, and it would have excited and stirred up the people. It is impossible even to guess what might not have come out. And what finally would have been the result of a verdict against Harden? In the state of public opinion which has resulted from the *Daily Telegraph* interview he would have had more chance of being acquitted.

One day I was talking about Harden with Colonel von Gontard and asked him: "Do you want simply to arrest him without further ado and let him vanish in Spandau?" He answered: "Naturally, a great many people would be glad to see that; but as is so often the case, we have not the pluck." "But," I objected, "seriously speaking, we must, after all, pay some attention to the Constitution to which we have sworn obedience."

Yesterday evening I had a very long conversation with Prince Friedrich Wilhelm,[2] who told me that when the Emperor was present in Donaueschingen he had got together some newspaper cuttings about the interview, and had sent them direct to the Emperor with an autograph letter. For so young a Prince this was an action that gives proof of independence and courage far above the average.

[1] Professor Theodor Schiemann. Keeper of the Archives of the University of Berlin. Leading authority on the history of Russo-German relations. See p. 292.

[2] The younger brother of the Courts "two princes," who was about twenty at the time.

13th January 1909.

Last night the Emperor again held forth at considerable length; he is very indignant that the details about his address of the 2nd January to the Commanders of the Army Corps had so quickly leaked out in civilian circles, and had appeared in the *Berliner Tageblatt*. He had ordered the strictest inquiry, he said, and a most curious clue was being followed up. General von Moltke, the Chief of the General Staff, knew for certain that as early as the morning of the 3rd January the address was known in full detail at the Russian Embassy. The Emperor added that in all probability Tatichev, who is attached to his person, had heard some of the Generals talking about it, when they met after the audience, and so had discovered everything. It was only natural, he added, that the Russian Embassy should have communicated all they knew to the Press, because Russia's aim was to incite England against Germany, and to prevent the visit of King Edward, which was planned for the second week in February.

All this he related last night in great detail, very richly embroidered and decorated, in the course of a long talk with the two equerries, von Senden and Holzing, and myself. The matter was no concern of ours. He would equally have told it to anybody else who happened to be present. If the King of England had been already here, he would without doubt have told it to him too. If in four weeks' time, when he is present, it still interests him, he will repeat it then.

The first consequence will be that the English will tell it confidentially to Russia, and put it in such a light that it is sure to arouse bad feeling against us. The second will be that the astonishment and wonder

of the English at our recklessness and indiscretion will —if such a thing is still possible—only be intensified, and they will say to themselves: "We must beware of this *enfant terrible*." Nowhere are we trusted as others are, so that international politics are full of unpleasant surprises for us.

The Emperor added a few stories, and among others, one to the effect that on the very day after a dinner in Italy, everything that he had said at table was reproduced word for word in the papers. A journalist, he said, had been among them disguised as a footman. I do not remember the circumstance, but it seems to me somewhat improbable. Then he told us that on one occasion he had given a sitting to an English photographer. His assistant looked very strange. He had an inquiry made about this assistant, and discovered that he was a journalist. Finally, the Emperor pointed out how incautious everyone was in the highest circles in Germany, especially officers. "How loudly," he said, "and recklessly they talk in the restaurants. Captain Hintze of the Navy spoke about all this to me only the other day. I have often both by word of mouth and in writing impressed on everyone that they must be more cautious, but it has done no good."

I attempted to reply that such carelessness as loud talking and letting oneself go in restaurants was certainly a characteristic of our officers, but that the fault lay in the one-sidedness of their life among their comrades in barracks, and especially in the Casinos, where there was never any reason for restraint. What I wanted to suggest was that it would be a good thing for the officers to get outside their Casinos a little more, and to have intercourse with others, especially people

who had not always lived so much in a world of their own, as they themselves. As usual I had no luck with my ideas.

In such a case the Emperor scarcely condescends to contradict me, but he sees at once what I am driving at, looks bored, then immediately breaks in with something to change the subject, and excludes me from the conversation. The net result is that my attempts to express my real opinions never meet with any success.

It is really amusing that the Emperor should be horrified at the want of caution in others, and strange that he should not have the least notion how careless he is himself. He thought it simply impossible that any one of the forty generals who were present could be conscious of anything to reproach himself with, in connection with the indiscretions of the 2nd January. If one or other of them had been guilty, he said, surely he would have admitted it. This blind faith in men, this idealism, and this tone of conviction is so amazing that one must have heard it to believe it. Here we have another of those contradictions in him that are so hard to understand—on the one hand, confidence carried to the point of extraordinary ingenuousness and simplicity, and, on the other, suspicion where it is quite unreasonable.

What the Emperor said about Tatichev was strange. He was very indignant that this General, though a Russian, could so abuse his position as to commit this indiscretion. At the same time he finds it only natural that Captain Hintze, who is in the same sort of way attached to the person of the Czar, should tell him everything that has in any way come to his ears. I suspect that the Emperor did little to discourage him.

I tried to make use of this opportunity to point out that to attach a foreign officer like Tatichev to his imperial person was a dangerous thing. The Emperor was not disposed to take any hint about this arrangement, which had been suggested by himself a few years previously; but he did say that General Tatichev must be kept at a greater distance. He should be kept not merely at a greater distance, but at an indefinite distance, and the best thing would be to abolish this superfluous position altogether. Personally, I do not think that it was Tatichev who communicated the whole business to the Russian Embassy, but the General Staff would no doubt be glad if their suspicion of him could be turned into a certainty.

14th January 1909.

Last night the Emperor talked to me at great length about Prince Bülow. He is still greatly irritated against him. He mentioned incidentally that the Chancellor had suggested to him the passing of a Law fixing the responsibility of Ministers. From this I gather that the problem of carrying through any satisfactory financial reform is causing the Chancellor great anxiety. Then the Emperor told me that he had been assured by the Prince that an article which had caused him great uneasiness had been written by Count Oppersdorff, and that the Silesian magnates as a body had been solidly behind it. This, the Emperor said, was not true. The Emperor also complained bitterly of the Foreign Office. Von Bülow, he said, had no idea of the personalities of the men with whom he had to deal, which was why we met with so many failures: Bülow did not pay enough attention to such things. One day he

had said that von Kiderlen-Wächter,[1] one of our Ambassadors, must be dismissed, but shortly afterwards he proposed him for another post.

It is singular that the Emperor should talk like this to me of all people, because I have never been in his good graces. On the contrary, I have always been slightly in disfavour. But the Emperor, who cannot resist the temptation of speaking about everything under the sun to anybody, always must have somebody with him. I wish he could only accustom himself to lead a quiet family life, and learn to read for himself, or to work alone, and to impose some reserve on himself when he mixes with others. As it is, he has got into the way of always being with people and always talking. Even when the Ministers have an audience, it requires the greatest ingenuity on their part to get a word in edgewise; if they are not clever enough, it ends in the Emperor giving them lectures, and very often about things with which they have nothing to do. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the mistakes committed by his official advisers make it easier for others to win influence over him.

The Emperor is too much spoilt by good fortune. After his speech to the Army Corps he bubbled over with excitement, just in the same way as he had effervesced after the first good news of Dernburg's diamonds. When he is in one of these exuberant moods, no one can do anything with him. It is only possible when he has some doubt of himself and feels in his heart of hearts a little humbled. But to hope for failures just for the sake of making him more tractable is more than one could do, and even so there are many

[1] Baron von Kiderlen-Wächter, Ambassador at Bucharest. Foreign Secretary 1910-1913.

"buts" when we have to deal with so complex a nature.

The Emperor is at the moment not very well disposed to the ladies of the Empress' circle, especially Fräulein von Gersdorff. The result will probably be that he will eliminate Countess Keller and Fräulein von Gersdorff from the daily *réunions*, but he has not yet made up his mind to take energetic steps, although he has often complained of what he has to endure from them.

These two ladies, especially Fräulein von Gersdorff, are very worthy and honest, but often tactless. The opinions so honestly expressed by them have never converted, or even influenced, the Emperor, and those who have spoken their mind have fallen into disfavour. In spite of the chivalry to ladies which his education has instilled in him, he occasionally shows very little consideration for them, and sometimes ignores them almost entirely. It must wound them deeply. At the moment he has the habit of nearly always answering Fräulein von Gersdorff in a tone of irritation, and will hardly ever let her finish a sentence. Last night it was much worse than usual—a very discouraging reward for the honest loyal Prussian convictions of Fräulein von Gersdorff, and for the courage and consistency with which she expresses them.

The last thing the Emperor did last night was to read us from an English magazine an article on a new theory of the origin of the world. It lasted till twelve o'clock. Even a complicated thing like that he cannot help reading aloud. It has become impossible for him to read anything, or to work quietly, by himself. His interest in these things is astonishing, and while he was reading it out, and when he was making his own commentaries on it, it seemed as if he were living for nothing

but this new idea. He has the gift of just absorbing enough of the superficial aspects of such a theory to enable him to talk about it as if he had been a professor of astronomy, who had worked for years and years in an observatory. This is how he is able to hoodwink the most famous men, to make them admire his great knowledge, his wonderful power of work, and his phenomenal grasp of ideas.

In a cleverly written book, *Prince Bülow and His Times*, by " Germanicus " (which is practically a eulogy from cover to cover and is full of inaccuracies), the author institutes a flattering parallel between the Emperor and Frederick the Great, who, when he had been attacked by a pasquinade in 1753, said to the Earl Marischal : " I am serving the State with all the power and integrity with which Nature has endowed me. Although my talents are weak, my account with the State is none the less clear, for no one can give more than he has, and it is an essential part of the conception of a public position, that he who fills it must be prepared for criticism, satire, and even calumny. All those who have directed the fortunes of States whether as ministers, generals, or kings, have hitherto been obliged to let detraction rage against them. I demand neither the refutation of the book nor the punishment of the author. I have read the pamphlet, and my pulse has not beaten any faster ; I have even communicated it to some of my friends."

The writer of this book actually has the face to compare this splendidly sincere, calm, and serious conception with the circumstances of to-day and the attitude of the Emperor.

20th January 1909.

The Emperor expressed strong disapproval of the speech which the Chancellor made yesterday in the House of Representatives. Count Eulenburg mentioned, however, that the speech had been received with general approval, and then it became evident once more that the Emperor knew it only from the condensed report in the *Korrespondenz Wedekind*. Consequently he was of the opinion that it was quite superfluous to drag in the affair of the *Daily Telegraph* of last November, and put an end to the conversation by saying that he would have a chance of reading the speech again, because Bülow would certainly send it to him. This is only another proof what a mistake the Emperor makes in reading nothing but the *Korrespondenz Wedekind*.

But neither does the Chancellor keep him properly informed by means of the extracts which the Foreign Office submits. One of the consequences of this strange habit of his is that the Emperor often interferes with telegrams and direct orders whenever he receives a piece of news which strikes him as unusual. From this has gradually sprung the idea that if he were actually to read some of the Opposition papers right through, the inevitable consequence would be that he would keep certain ministries and chancelleries on tenterhooks, and there would be no escape from the consequences of his over hasty actions. At the moment the Emperor has not the least desire to read any newspaper, and he has often said so emphatically.

A newspaper article on the American Professor, John Burgess, entitled "An American Panegyric of William II.," reads as follows:—

New York, 6th January 1909.

Professor John Burgess, the first Roosevelt Professor of the University of Berlin, Dean of the Political Faculty of the University of Columbia, recently delivered an address to the Germanic Society in which he expressed the highest appreciation of the German people, and declared that no ruler in the world had been so misunderstood as the Emperor William II. He had never, said the Professor, in his life had the good fortune to meet a man who possessed a keener intelligence, wider knowledge, a warmer heart, higher ideals, sincerer courtesy, a more sympathetic understanding of the views of others, with a keener anxiety to do good and to show himself in every relation of life helpful to his fellow creatures, or with greater loyalty to his friends, his country, and the interests of the whole civilised world, than His Majesty, the German Emperor. "He is," he said, "a great statesman, a friend of humanity, a pure idealist, sincerely ready to be of service to everybody, an indefatigable worker for the welfare of his country, and the peace and civilisation of the world."

Professor Burgess, who was in Berlin for some time as an Exchange Professor, here shows once again how magnificently skilful the Emperor is in impressing any man of intellect, with whom he comes into contact. I have more than once observed the Professor in the presence of the Emperor, and am perfectly convinced that no personal motives of flattery influenced him. But he has, in the strictest sense of the word, been fascinated by the personality of the Emperor. The little brochure which he has just published about recent events in Germany and the relation between ruler and people, shows to what an extent he has been magnetised

by the Emperor, and sees everything through his spectacles.

I had a curious experience a few days ago. A deputation of Russian officers had presented the Emperor with a very beautiful album. After the album had been carried from the Star Hall to the Library, the Emperor discovered that the gilded crest of the regiment had got lost from the cover. He ordered me to look for it, and I found it in one of the rooms through which it had been carried. I rather expected the Emperor would be pleased, but instead of that he used the opportunity for making some extremely biting remarks in the presence of all the foreign officers: "My Gentlemen of the Court lose everything. You cannot trust them with the smallest thing." Naturally, he was only half in earnest, but he sometimes says these things in a very unpleasant way, and has thus succeeded in causing a great deal of discontent, if not enmity. The tragic thing is that he himself has absolutely no idea that his words or actions may wound others, and it is vain to hope for any improvement.

* * *

A genius like Frederick the Great, whom the Emperor would dearly love to resemble, was able to anticipate the natural development of his country and achieve immense good; but psychologically one can hardly expect that greatness so acquired can be maintained. Its justification ended with the death of the genius who created it, and who alone could give it the qualities that endure. So it happens that the much vaunted development which is due to the work of individuals like Frederick the Great or Bismarck does not always mean lasting progress for a country, for

the inevitable reaction will certainly be dangerous, and may well destroy all that had previously been attained.

Nearly all the German Princes were present at the Emperor's birthday celebration in order to express their loyalty and devotion to the Emperor, particularly after what had happened last autumn. The importance of the incident is much overrated. The Princes would certainly have done the Empire more good, if one of them had long ago enlightened the Emperor as to the serious consequences of many of his actions. The Emperor is in theory first among his equals, but he wrote in Munich : " Sic volo ; sic jubeo," and has frequently acted accordingly. The German Princes might long ago have intervened, but they were found totally wanting. They would have done more to strengthen German unity by timely warnings of the dangers which threaten the Empire, than they have done by silence or protestations of loyalty.

On this occasion Count Eulenburg succeeded in restoring correct relations between the Emperor and the Prince of Lippe-Detmold for the moment. The Emperor can never forgive the Prince for having succeeded to the throne against his wishes. What particularly rankles is the legend on the coins minted immediately after he succeeded to the throne: "Through war to victory." Count Eulenburg represented to the Emperor very adroitly that he was far too great a personality to live in constant discord with a mere Prince of Lippe-Detmold, and was able to carry out his very kindly design.

5th February 1909.

Once again, the other day I was very indiscreet. Some newspaper cuttings about Russia were being

read to the Emperor, and the gist of the conversation that followed was that our neighbours were degenerate and foolish from every point of view, whereas Germany was the embodiment of wisdom and virtue. I have realised for a long time past that it is hopeless to contradict on such occasions, but the other day, when I had a talk with the Emperor, I was tempted to support the opposite standpoint at some length. The same thing happened as often before: he was not violent, nor did he contradict me emphatically, but he made me feel very clearly that everything I said was objectionable to him. In the end he broke off the conversation, and left us earlier than he would otherwise have done.

8th February 1909.

As perhaps it may interest me at some later time I will just jot down briefly what happened at the end of our stay in Donaueschingen in November. As usual the Emperor had been fox-hunting during the day, and I could not help admiring how cleverly everything had been arranged. From the hunt servants, who seemed to be unsurpassable in every detail, including the blowing of the horns, down to the beaters, who were most perfectly drilled, everything was first rate.

We had the usual dinner and the ladies, Princess Fürstenberg, Princess Hohenlohe, etc., were in full evening dress with all their jewels, the gentlemen in green or black swallow tails with black shoes, and as there had been a steeplechase in the neighbourhood, some were in scarlet. This exceptionally smart and brilliant company assembled after dinner in the beautiful Great Hall of the Castle, with a band playing on the staircase. Suddenly Count Hülsen-Haeseler appeared

in ballet skirts,—not for the first time—and began to dance to the music. Everybody found it most entertaining, for the Count danced beautifully, and it is an unusual experience to see a Chief of the Military Cabinet capering about in the costume of a lady of the ballet.

After finishing one of his dances, the Count went to the adjoining gallery, which leads to the Princess' drawing-room, to get his breath. I was standing about four paces from the entrance to the gallery, and heard a heavy fall. I hurried in, where I saw Count Hülsen lying at full length on the ground, with his head towards the window. Several other men quickly followed me, and we did what we could for the Count, and, as I noticed at once that it was most serious, I looked for the doctor. The Emperor was still standing by the fireplace in the hall talking to Valentini and suspecting nothing. I reported to him that Count Hülsen had just had a fall, and had fainted, and that I thought it was very serious, and was looking for the Staff Physician, Dr. Niedtner. The Emperor went to the Count. I ran up the stairs to the doctor's room, but he was already on his way, as one of the equerries, Herr von Senden, had called him.

The doctor then began to try to restore Count Hülsen, and continued his efforts for an hour and a quarter, with the Emperor standing by, and Princess Fürstenberg weeping on a chair. A second doctor very soon came from the town to help Dr. Niedtner. What made the whole tragedy more poignant was that the music continued while he was still busy with the dead man. At eleven o'clock the attempts at restoration were given up as hopeless, and the doctor was of the opinion that the Count, who had always had a weak heart, and had had a severe

fainting fit in Metz, when he was still with the Army, had had a sudden heart failure brought on by the efforts of the dance, and had died before he fell.

The body was then carried to the large saloon on the floor above, which was reserved for the greatest State banquets. During the night all the necessary arrangements were made for a funeral service, which took place in the morning of the following day in this saloon. The Emperor was deeply affected.

At about midnight he told me that the journey to Kiel for the swearing-in of the Troops must be cancelled, but he would go the day after the funeral service, as arranged, to Baden-Baden to meet the Empress. During the night news was sent by telephone and telegram to Countess Hülsen, and various other things had to be done, which kept us busy for a long time. The Emperor was always with us, and every now and again sat down to the table to write telegrams. He gave me the telegram to the Empress, in which he said that he had lost his best friend.

He had a long conversation with the clergyman, who had been summoned to conduct the service the next day, and told him what he was to say in his funeral oration. Suddenly I saw the Emperor stoop and signal to me to come to him, while at the same time the minister seemed to have vanished. When I approached them, after the Emperor had signed to me again and again, I saw that the clergyman was lying motionless at full length just in front of the Emperor. The effort of standing so long before him, just after being suddenly pulled out of bed, had been too much for the poor man, and he had fainted. I immediately saw that it was not serious, and had some brandy brought, when he soon recovered. He was then commanded not to deliver the

address on the next day, but only to conduct a short service.

At two o'clock in the morning the Emperor again altered all the arrangements for the journey. I pointed out to him that it would be dangerous to make alterations twice in one night for the long journey from Donaueschingen to Baden-Baden, and that the arrangements for the meeting of the Emperor's and the Empress' special trains, and for making them up into one would be very complicated. The Emperor put his hand on my shoulder, and looking at me with a tragic expression, as much as to say that I was always the one to make life hard for him, exclaimed: "Is this the time for you to want to make difficulties?" I then had to alter all the arrangements, and it was four o'clock before we could think of rest or sleep.

10*th February* 1909.

The eagerly anticipated visit of the King and Queen of England has now actually taken place. Their Majesties arrived at Rathenow at about half-past nine, where the Guard of Honour and the officials who had gone to meet them were in readiness. The troops were drawn up at the station, but the King was still sitting in his saloon in his shooting jacket when the train arrived, and it took him about twelve minutes to change into morning dress. During the whole of this time the military band played "God save the King," without stopping, over and over again, expecting His Majesty to appear every moment. The English gentlemen stood there heroically bareheaded in spite of the cold. When the train arrived in Berlin, the King stepped on to the platform, not from his own saloon, but from that of

the Queen, which was five coaches lower down, so that the whole solemn reception, for which the Emperor and Empress, the Princes and Princesses had assembled in a body, ended in a muddle.

Whenever we take a journey I always ask the Emperor beforehand whether he intends to get out of his own saloon or from the dining car, so that I can give the railway authorities instructions to stop the train at exactly the right place. Such details have no decisive influence on the history of the world, but are not without their importance.

During the King's drive through the city, the horses behaved badly. They were all new, and none of them pulled their weight. The carriage in which the Empress sat with the Queen and Princess Victoria Louise went so slowly, in particular, that in places the police and the bystanders had to push it, and at other moments the horses reared and would not move at all. The Empress and the Queen got nervous, and finally changed over into a court equipage which happened to be driving empty at the end of the procession.

In the Castle there was a great reception, in which everything we could possibly display was on view.

As the Emperor was presenting to the Queen of England the highest, the high and the ordinary officers of the Court, it came to the turn of the Master of the Horse, Herr von Reischach, and the Emperor said loudly enough for everyone present to hear: "This is the Master of the Horse, who has just made an incredible ass of himself with your carriage." I was very sorry for Reischach, for it was exceedingly painful and humiliating for him, especially as he is an assiduous and exceptionally capable Master of the Horse. Everybody that has had anything to do with horses knows

that one cannot get inside their skins, and that things of this kind may happen. Otherwise everything went off very well. The King has aged considerably and got very stout.

12th February 1909.

The Emperor was delighted with the visit of the King of England and said: "The English cannot come up to us in this sort of thing," meaning the splendour of the procession, the royal apartments in the Castle, the Banquet, the Court Ball, and so forth.

The day before yesterday, in the evening, the Emperor was telling us that when he was last at Homburg, he had bought for £1000, the Star of the Garter of George II., which was part of the estate of the Duke of Cambridge. The Badge itself set in brilliants to be worn on the ribbon, which is of considerably greater value, was later given to the Emperor by Baron Schröder in Hamburg. The Emperor said that he could not understand why the English Crown had not bought this Star. "The fact is that my uncle thinks he has no money, which is a curious notion of his," he said. But to anyone who knows that it is the fault of the Emperor himself that Germany's finances, and his own have, in spite of the Empire's enormous economic progress, fallen from the summit of prosperity which they had reached twenty years ago, it is instructive to hear him talk like this. No one could believe it, who had not heard it. Finally, he said that after he had bought the Star, he had had it sent to Godet, the jeweller, to be valued, and that the latter had said that it was worth £3000. He ended up by saying: "That is the way to do it, if one wants to make £2000 on a deal."

Perhaps, if I should one day read these lines, when I am old, I might think that the Emperor did not mean it seriously. But this is by no means the case. As so often happens with royalties, his simplicity in business matters is sometimes astounding.

On the whole, both politicians and business circles seem to be more than satisfied with the visit of the King and Queen of England. Personally I am not altogether pleased that England should have practically doubled its Fleet in the North Sea just now. But at the same time, it is we ourselves who are chiefly to blame for this speeding up of the armament race on land and sea.

The King of England is so stout that he completely loses his breath when he has to climb upstairs, and has to save himself in many ways. The Emperor told us that at the first family dinner he fell asleep. At the lunch at the British Embassy he was indisposed for a few minutes, but he eats, drinks, and smokes enormously. He has an amiable pleasant manner and looks very shrewd.

But I fancy that the part he plays in the affairs of his country is smaller than we have imagined. He allows a great deal of independence to the persons who have been carefully chosen for their duties, and only takes a hand when there is something of special importance to call for his intervention, and then with his age and experience and thorough knowledge of the world he acts very adroitly. I can imagine that a sly and amiable smile steals over his face, when he thinks how the whole world looks upon him as the guiding spirit of all the solid and brilliant achievements of British diplomacy. He sometimes travels with two or three friends only, almost like a private person; and for this reason, if for no other, he cannot keep all the threads

of affairs in his hands in the way that the world is led to believe.

I often think of Macaulay's doctrine that

"It is not strange that, when men are refused what is reasonable, they should demand what is unreasonable. . . . We have seen that the true source of the power of demagogues is the obstinacy of rulers, and that a liberal government makes a conservative people." [1]

The timely translation into practice of this wise teaching of a great historian might profit us vastly.

I think it is a great improvement that the Emperor should not have delivered his speech at the English banquet from memory, but read it. What mischief his impromptu orations have caused! The material for his official speeches is always worked up for him by the Civil Cabinet, but he gives way to the impulse of the moment, and as likely as not, will change whatever has been prepared into something so fantastic and so exaggerated, or add something so amazing, that one can only feel he has gone completely off the rails. The preparation of speeches is very necessary, and I hope he will not give up the practice. It will do us more good in the long run than priding ourselves on the gifts and genius of our sovereign.

13th February 1909.

Late last night, when I was ready to go home, the Empress sent for me to her drawing-room, and in very amiable words expressed her appreciation of all I had done on the occasion of the visit of the King and Queen of England. I used the opportunity to make a few proposals and suggestions that seemed to me practical, but I had not much luck. As soon as I mentioned anything that was wrong, and asked that

[1] "Works," Vol. viii., p. 53.

it might be remedied, she made proposals of her own, not on the lines I had hoped, but generally in a way which would have made matters worse, and immediately made me feel that my own suggestions were impracticable. I could not help remembering that once when I had said at Rominten, that the cooks were unreasonably over-worked, she had answered: "Then just let new cooks come from Berlin every other day."

15th February 1909.

To-day the Empress opened her heart again to Count Eulenburg. She said it was melancholy to notice how incautiously the Emperor spoke. He had been talking again last night she said, for two and a half hours in the presence of the British Ambassador and Herr von Bethmann. She was particularly concerned that he should have said so much about Kadinen where, in her opinion, he had been so outrageously deceived. He had, for instance, spoken of the magnificent success of the Savings Bank, which he had founded there, and told everybody that nearly every school child there in the last year saved £40 — actually £40. The Empress said, and quite rightly: "Cannot you imagine what the English will think if the British Ambassador reports everything he has heard here to London." At the end of this interview Count Eulenburg begged the Empress once again to call the Emperor's attention to the danger of such conversations with foreigners, particularly with diplomatists. She answered: "Unfortunately I can do nothing. The Emperor always says in these cases, 'Go away. You don't understand these things.'"

The worst of all is that the Emperor is allowing him-

self more and more to get into the habit of doing no real work.[1] He rises late, breakfasting at 9 o'clock, and it is very difficult to get him for two hours in the morning for audiences; and he does not like it. Often he makes use of an audience for giving a lecture to his advisers. Then comes lunch at 11 o'clock, and at 12.30 he takes his drive. Then he has tea, and after that a little sleep, and before dinner, which is at 8 o'clock, he occasionally signs some documents. His afternoon sleep, which sometimes lasts as long as three hours, makes it easy for the Emperor to sit up till 12 or 1 o'clock, and what he likes best is to be in the centre of a circle of people who listen to him devoutly, and to whom he talks without restraint. This is how he really passes his life. It is interesting to compare that reality with what the historians are writing about it.

16th February 1909.

The Emperor nowadays cannot be alone; it seems as if he must always have people to whom he can give lectures about everything which happens to interest him, and he is not very careful in the choice of his audience. In the same way, he cannot read a report in a newspaper or a book without making pencil notes in the margin. As these notes are written entirely under the influence of the feelings of the moment, when he is not restrained by any voice of caution, they will one day be an uncommonly productive but very dangerous mine for the historian.

His feelings towards the Chancellor have not yet changed. This is proved by the note which he yesterday wrote on one of the Chancellor's reports: "He wants to be Chief Court Marshal too, I suppose."

[1] See p. 228.

12th March 1909.

Yesterday the Chancellor asked for an audience at 10 o'clock. The Emperor walked up and down with him in the picture-gallery until 12.30, and they had the first opportunity for a thorough explanation since the events of last November.

The Chancellor said he felt that he had no longer the confidence of the Emperor and must therefore beg to be relieved of his offices. The Emperor answered that he could not at the moment accept his resignation for reasons of State, and that first of all Bülow must carry through his financial reforms. Bülow seems to have won all along the line this time, though the Emperor, I hear, said immediately after this conversation of two and a half hours, " I have done with Bülow," and later to Eulenburg, " When the financial reforms are passed, I will take another Chancellor."

If Bülow could only have the strength of mind, now that his position has been undoubtedly made more secure, to give up his habit of constant compliance with the Emperor, and display resolution and principle, he might after all, as things are to-day, turn out to be the one Chancellor who can serve the country best. After all, the Emperor has nobody with whom he can work so well as with Bülow.

I have just had news that the Emperor has again invited himself for this very evening to dine with the Chancellor. This is, from the point of view of the Emperor himself, a too rapid capitulation. If Bülow could only keep his position, the most optimistic hopes would be justified. The fact is that the Emperor simply cannot bear the thought of having to do without the daily reports of Bülow on politics and other matters.

But will Bülow be able to prevent the dangerous interference of the Emperor with his policy, or will he have, as before, to devote the greatest part of his time, strength, and intelligence to repairing all the damage done by the Emperor's unexpected personal intervention ?

15th March 1909.

The Emperor has sent a communication to the Crown Prince now at Frankfort on the Main, through Count Eulenburg to the effect that he had had a long explanation with Bülow and had refused his request to be relieved of his offices after he had asked to be forgiven for leaving his Imperial master in the lurch last November. The Emperor's version was that the Chancellor based his apology on the grounds that he had not quite remembered many of the previous conversations with His Majesty, and that, had he but remembered, he would never have taken up the position he did. The reconciliation is thus complete, and the Emperor goes daily to the Chancellor. Everything now depends on whether Bülow has been taught by the experiences of the last six months, and will stiffen his enormous abilities with a little more determination.

The last few days the Emperor's mind has been almost exclusively occupied with what might happen in the case of a mobilisation. Unfortunately he attaches enormous importance to the most trivial things. He is much occupied with such momentous questions as those of new kinds of chin straps, new fastenings for helmet chains, double seams on soldiers' trousers, and frequent inspections of the Wardrobe with Father Schulz.[1]

[1] The Emperor's chief body-servant.

Otherwise everything goes on as before. We keep telling each other how magnificent everything is in Germany, what successes we have achieved, and how stupid the rest of the world is. The other day the Emperor talked at lunch, at Admiral von Hollmann's, for an hour and a half, that is to say, uninterruptedly all the time, with gentlemen who were quite unknown to him, like Herr von Fürstenberg, the manager of the Handelsgesellschaft, and Herr Schwabach. It is nothing new that he should tell the most extraordinary stories on these occasions, and we have given up wondering why there are no more secrets.

None the less I was astonished to hear the day before yesterday that a financial magnate of wide experience like Herr Fürstenberg had been completely dazzled by his conversation with the Emperor; but the effect will in all probability soon wear off.

18*th March* 1909.

Since the speech of Mr. Asquith, the English Prime Minister, the papers are discussing whether a proposal for a mutual reduction of naval expenditure has been made by Great Britain. It is interesting to note that the Emperor has frequently told us that Sir Charles Hardinge had had the audacity at the last meeting with King Edward at Friedrichshof to approach him personally on this question of retrenchment. The Emperor invariably asserts that his answer was: "A demand made by England to Germany to limit her armaments would mean war, and England can have it at once, if she really wants it. In any case the development of the German Navy, is a matter which concerns Germany and Germany alone, and no in-

terference from any other Power can be tolerated for a moment."

This conversation has been reported to Prince Bülow, and that was the cause of a disagreement between the Chancellor and the Emperor during the summer. The Chancellor had expressed the opinion that he thought such an answer dangerous to our interests. It is extraordinary that Admiral von Tirpitz, had declared in the Budget Commission of the Reichstag, that he knew nothing of an English proposal for the reduction of naval expenditure.

26th March 1909.

Yesterday afternoon I had a long conversation with General von L. We discussed the possibilities of an immediate war. He said that we should have a good chance against France as well as Russia, and he even went so far as to say that the present juncture would be favourable for provoking a war, which would relieve us of difficulties both at home and abroad. When I objected that the Emperor's nerves were in a bad condition, and that his difficult personality would be a perpetual source of trouble, he answered: "I quite agree with you. Moltke is not afraid of France, or of Russia, but of the Emperor."

He added that everything in the last twenty-one years that had tended to drag us down from our high position in the world must in the last resort be ascribed to the Emperor's influence. On the other hand we have to be grateful to him, he said, for much that he had done to further Germany's progress. At the present moment the Emperor is talking more about England than ever. He never thinks before speaking, as we know, and so the authorities in England will learn everything, and

the maintenance of good relations with that country will be endangered.

9th April 1909.

During the last week the Emperor has been so much preoccupied with an English book *Conversations with Christ*,[1] that he has talked of nothing but religion. When he is under the spell of transcendentalism, a belief in miracles and so forth, he talks so naïvely and with such a simplicity of faith, that anyone who listens to him must admit to himself that to express even a hint of doubt or contradiction would be to wound the Emperor's religious convictions most deeply. There was a time when I used to attempt something of the kind, but the effect was deplorable. The results were always marked irritation, and an abrupt breaking off of the discussion. I was ignored for days, weeks, even months. I am quite free to admit that I am not a skilful disputant, and also that I did not feel so very much injured by being ignored. To be slightly out of favour often makes one's duties easier.

I expect no one thought it possible that we should be as successful as we have been in the Bosnian question.[2] We have won all along the line, but only by bringing up our heaviest guns, for we were really ready to fight. How we are to protect ourselves against the hatred which this diplomatic success has stirred up against us is a problem which the future will have to solve. The whole situation may be put in a sentence: "For twenty years Germany has had constant interference in inter-

[1] By Bernard Lucas (Macmillan).

[2] The annexation of Bosnia by Austria, which had the important effect of calling forth the delaration on the part of Germany that she would support Austria's policy in the Balkans in all things.

national affairs from All-Highest quarters—and no success; no sooner does this interference cease than we win a great diplomatic triumph."

Bülow in disgrace was able to achieve great results with his foreign policy. I only fear that he will not be able to continue, because now his one aim is to be completely restored to favour. The excitement in England over the question of the Navy still gives cause for anxiety. We are far from realising how much we ourselves are to blame. The Emperor himself brusquely rejected the proposed naval agreement in Kronburg. The shrewdest German diplomatists admit without hesitation that an agreement on naval armaments would have been a blessing, and in private conversation, over a cup of tea, Prince Bülow does not mind saying so himself. In Parliament, however, he has spoken in quite a different tone. He had neither the courage nor the skill to convert the Emperor. Apart from the fanatical fire-eaters not a few people of influence of all classes throughout the country are opposed to limitation of armaments in any form or shape. It would be extremely interesting one day to have light thrown on the precise relations between the naval enthusiasts and the men who build the ships. The power of the steel kings weighs very heavily in the scale, and it has been dinned into our ears often enough that their zeal for their business and their passion for Stock Exchange booms are a serious menace to the nation.

10th April 1909.

I have recently come across some interesting reflections on Court life which are still applicable to-day, in a book called *Pensées de M. le Comte d' Oxenstirn* (The Hague

1742)—which I found in the Royal Library in Berlin. The author, who was a great-nephew of the famous Swedish Chancellor Oxenstierna, wrote 150 years ago: "Life at Court is like that in the galleys, where weak rowers are flogged and the good ones get rusks and water. Outwardly no calling seems more alluring than that of the courtier, and in none is there so much bitterness and sorrow. In his own house a nobleman is master; at Court he is a slave. When Princes are gracious, the whole Court will hate him in its heart of hearts. When his master lets him feel his displeasure, everyone will treat him with contempt. If he shows any independence of spirit, he will soon be betrayed. If he has any outstanding ability, the favourites, through whose eyes alone Princes see what is going on, will prevent them from noticing him."

This is pessimistic enough, but it is essentially true of all courts.

15th April 1909.

There is a general tendency to judge the Crown Prince too severely. Of course he is very immature for a Prince of twenty-six. He is somewhat reckless and seems to have no serious interests. But no one is honestly concerned in educating him and speaking to him on grave matters or allowing him to take part in any substantial business. No one seems to understand his really amiable and unspoilt character. The Crown Prince is half an Englishman and half a sportsman. It must be difficult for any Englishman to accustom himself to our traditional Prussian ideas of duty; nevertheless the English are every inch men and have known how to win an Empire that embraces the greater part of the world.

The Crown Prince is largely imbued with this English spirit of independence and still more with English conceptions of sport, which constantly conflict with the old correct, rigid, Prussian formalism and ideas of duty. Undoubtedly he may develop along paths in which he will go astray, but he should not be judged too severely on small points, for there are many good, healthy and fruitful elements in his love of sport. His own idea of himself is very original. Not so long ago he said something like this: "My father will never understand me, for his idea of sport is quite different from mine. This is perfectly natural, for from youth up he has been prevented from taking any part in sport by his undeveloped arm. But for me mankind is divided into two categories: those who are really sportsmen and those who are not. For the latter I have no use at all." These are very immature and naïve ideas, but they are not the worst a young man of twenty-six can have.

The Crown Princess is very amiable, clever, and highly cultivated, so it may be hoped that she will counteract this exaggerated worship of sport. But above all I believe that if the Crown Prince were ever faced with serious tasks, or were suddenly to come to the throne, there would soon be an end of his crude theories of life. . . .[1]

[1] I have unfortunately lost the rest of my notes for the year 1909.—*Author's Note.*

CHAPTER XII

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

18th January 1910.

WE cannot take it seriously, but the Emperor said quite gravely, though it was probably meant only half in earnest: "I have told Schoen[1] and Wangenheim[2] that they must see that everything is quiet in Greece so that I can go to Corfu."[3]

14th February 1910.

After all, everything is moving in the same grooves as before. It is true that the Emperor learnt a little caution from what happened in November of the year before last, and avoids saying anything in public which may cause uneasiness; but still he is far from being convinced in his heart of hearts that his former speeches and interference in foreign and home politics were entirely out of place in the twentieth century, appropriate as they might have been to the absolute monarchies of the eighteenth.

The whole of yesterday was in a sense taken up by lunch, for we stood about from one o'clock to four o'clock; and again in the evening conversed with other people from eight o'clock till one in the morning. On these occasions the Emperor mostly soliloquises, and takes the opportunity of expressing his opinions in

[1] Foreign Secretary; later Ambassador in Paris till the outbreak of war.
[2] Ambassador at Constantinople.
[3] See p. 287.

great detail and with the air of an expert on everything under the sun. Usually he gives audience at the suggestion of the Chancellor, the Chief of the Private Cabinet, or some other high official, to men of science, artists, or big industrialists. It sometimes so happens that he has just heard interesting reports from our representatives abroad. He has an extraordinary knack of assimilating the chief points in them, and loves to reproduce them all for the benefit of others in brilliantly clever phrases, as if they were the fruits of his own brain and his own views. He thus manages to impress the ablest men, including eminent artists and scholars more deeply and permanently than one would suppose possible, because they seldom have a chance of realising how much of all this knowledge is only so much goods in transit. They are dazzled by his personality; they are overawed by the pomp and circumstance of the Court and they enjoy being magnetized, because they feel how glad the Emperor is to see them listening devoutly and often nodding their heads in assent, and how ready the All-Powerful is afterwards to honour a good listener in the most amiable and gratifying fashion. They often do not notice, or do not want to notice, that the apparent thoroughness with which he weighs scientific evidence, his keen appreciation of all artistic values, his acute treatment of all political questions, are nothing but superficial cramming. The Emperor never penetrates the essentials of anything, and this shallowness explains why he so often goes off the rails. When he is left to think for himself his temperament gets the better of him.

All this is readily intelligible to anyone who realises what his daily life actually is. Travelling for nine months, and then only the winter at home. Where is there any

time in this whirl of social life for quiet concentration or serious work? His habit now is to get up late,[1] between nine and ten o'clock, and have a heavy breakfast of three hot courses; then a drive; then a short walk, with the Chancellor, it may be, or the Foreign Minister. From twelve o'clock onwards he gives audiences till one, when there is lunch. Then he drives out again, then he sleeps for one or two hours, then at eight o'clock there is dinner to which guests are invited, or a visit to the theatre, and inevitably after that conversation till twelve or one o'clock.

A few days ago Admiral von Tirpitz, Vice-Admiral von Müller, Privy Councillor Koser, Director of the State Archives, Professor Schmidt, Rector of the University, and Professor Schiemann were invited. It was just at the time that von Oldenburg[2] had made his notorious speech, in which he said that the Emperor ought to have power to send a lieutenant and ten soldiers into the Reichstag and close it at any moment. Before the Emperor came in, we had all been talking about it, and it must be admitted that all present were of one mind as to the recklessness of such provocative language. No sooner, however, did the Emperor appear, than we returned to the subject, and it was surprising to hear him dismiss it as of no consequence, and more or less of a joke. He had not the faintest understanding of the folly of such a speech. He even said he was glad, that this parliamentary mob had once more been properly taught who really was the master in the German Empire. As usual, there was no one at hand to grasp the opportunity and speak his mind in all seriousness. It was a man's dinner and a man's party, in the intimacy of the circle

[1] Compare p. 261.

[2] Von Oldenburg, one of the leaders of the Agrarian party.

already mentioned, and no opportunity could have been more favourable.

Among all our Professors the one who at the moment exercises the greatest influence is Professor Wheeler, an American, The Emperor listens to him more readily than he does to anybody else, after which he is fond of passing on Wheeler's ideas to another circle as his own reflections and observations. His particular friends now are General von Kessel and Prince Fürstenberg, and they owe the privilege to their talent for telling amusing stories just as Phili Eulenburg did in his time. Both of them can tell funny little anecdotes, not only for hours, but actually for days, together. This sort of thing does not improve the mind, although it must be admitted that Phili Eulenburg's conversation was intellectually on a higher level. But now the people who tell stories are so commonplace and vulgar, that they bring themselves down to the level of clowns at a village fair, not only by the jokes they make, but still more by the tricks to which they submit from the Kaiser. Take it all in all, one can only be astonished that the coach still goes jogging along. The foundations of the Prussian State and the German Empire must after all be very solid. We can only hope that they will be able to resist the violent shocks which await them in the storm which is brooding over us.

16*th February* 1910.

I was looking the other day at the time tables of the five Majordomos, the eight Grooms of the Chamber, the seven *Chasseurs du Corps*, the seven Court *Chasseurs*, the nine Valets and the sixteen Court Footmen, and was astonished to see how very little work can be found for

these liveried servants, even at a large Court, where there is so much activity as there is with us. We have among them, for instance, Court Footmen who, after having served as non-commissioned officers for not more than from four to six years, so that they are now only in the middle twenties, have only been on duty for eighty-one days in the whole year. There were more than a hundred and thirty nine days in the year, in which not a single Court Footman was at work. In addition they have at their own request received as much as forty-five days' leave. In the rest of the year, *i.e.* in some cases when they had not asked for leave, they were left to their own devices here in Berlin with absolutely nothing to do for as much as two hundred and eighty days. Of the Valets none were on duty for fewer than seventy-one days, but none for more than a hundred and fifty. The *Chasseurs* were occupied on an average for a hundred and twenty days, the *Chasseurs du Corps* for about the same time, and the Grooms of the Chamber considerably less.

I see no way out of the complication, because it is difficult to find work for them at Court; and on the other hand the staff could not be reduced, because one would have to rely too much upon casual service on great occasions. The permanent staff leaves little to be desired in perfection of training, and above all in reliability; and it must be placed to the credit of our regular servants, that although sometimes they have nothing to do, at other times they are terribly overworked, even for whole nights in succession.

Their work on the whole gives them very little satisfaction. They see enormous luxury before their eyes every day, whereas they themselves have to live in very meagre circumstances. Service at Court tests a

man's character and power of self-control, especially in view of the very arbitrary treatment some of his superiors are apt to mete out to him.

19th February 1910.

A short time ago we were discussing the possibility of a change in the principle of the appointment of the *Chasseurs du Corps*. Difficulties are being raised by the *Chasseurs* of Class A, whose education has been considerably above the level of that of the footmen, and who, as trained Foresters, have the right to employment in the Service of the Government. These men are anxious to receive the status of Civil Servants, and no longer to rank as liveried footmen, and the problem which has lately come to a head has been troubling us for some time. Eulenburg, Lyncker, and I have had many conversations on the subject. We have discussed the matter in detail, but without achieving any result, with some older and more experienced men, such as the stewards of the Imperial Castles, who started life in this service. In spite of the good wages they receive, and in spite of the privilege of serving in the immediate neighbourhood of His Majesty, these men resent their lower social position. They feel that they are just footmen; on the other hand the possible consequences make it impossible to grant their wishes, especially with regard to the status of Civil Servants.

At all our meetings I have advocated the abandonment of the selection of *Chasseurs du Corps* from the *Chasseurs* of Class A., exclusively, that is to say, from men who thereby lose all prospect of any post under Government, and have advocated the choice of suitable men from the Jäger battalions. We should thus get the best

material, and we should have a much larger field to choose from, than is the case with the comparatively unsuitable elements of Class A. The men would be much less exacting and they would not feel that they were suffering any social disadvantage. They would also take more pleasure in their work.

Eulenburg and Lyncker agreed with me, but said that if we altered the principle of the appointment of these *Chasseurs du Corps*, we must make a report to His Majesty. That is certainly true, because the Emperor has always attached great importance to Class A, and naturally notices when a man not belonging to this class suddenly appears among his personal servants, and in any case there are mischief makers who would be only too glad to call his attention to any such alterations. We therefore agreed that the matter should be reported to the Emperor and that he should be asked to sanction the change.

As the control of the domestic staff and the appointment of new servants are in Herr von Lyncker's special department, he said he would undertake this. The day before yesterday, however, we discussed it again and it appeared then that both Count Eulenburg and Count Lyncker are anxious to postpone the matter still further because they are afraid to talk about it to the Emperor. If, they said, we brought the matter up, we ran the risk, either of his flying into a rage and victimising the *Chasseurs*, which would seriously prejudice the administration, or else of his taking the opposite line, supporting them, and immediately ordering them to be granted the status of Civil Servants. In either case we should have to face a definite decision, which might have inconvenient, and even dangerous, consequences. The matter will therefore remain un-

settled for years. I wonder how many questions there are in home and foreign politics which are thus left in suspense, simply because we fear that orders from the highest quarters may drive us on to the wrong road.

21st February 1910.

Yesterday Herr von Rheinbaben (Minister of Finance), and Herr von Breitenbach (Minister of Railways)[1] came to breakfast in the Japanese room.

The Emperor was in a bad temper at the delay in the rebuilding of the Opera House and at table tweaked von Rheinbaben by the ear, and several times hit von Breitenbach on the shoulder in a far from friendly manner.

It is very difficult to know how to behave when one is asked to breakfast and is badly treated by one's host. Last Saturday, Herr von Dernburg, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, was not ashamed to say to the Emperor during a man's dinner: "Your Majesty has good justification for saying, 'There is nothing for it but to have my Ministers in a real funk of me.'" At this dinner those present included Herr von Delbrück,[2] the Secretary of State for the Interior, Count Hülsen, the Intendant of the Court Theatres, Admiral Hollmann, Herr Delbrück (the banker), Herr von Gwinner, Herr Fürstenberg, Herr von Friedländer-Fuld, Herr Schwabach and Herr James Simon.

22nd February 1910.

Yesterday His Majesty expressed the opinion that England was completely played out; that the upper

[1] Herr von Breitenbach, Minister of Railways 1908-1918, was in charge of the mobilization in August 1914.

[2] Klemens von Delbruck, Secretary of State for the Interior, 1909-1916.

classes of society were utterly demoralised, that corruption and incapacity were rampant in the Army and Navy, and worst of all, that the industrial and economic life of the British Empire was in a state of stagnation. This, he said, showed how, in her development, England had arrived at a state of hypertrophy, and would be unable to keep her place in the competition among nations. Everywhere the growing deterioration was glaringly evident, and the world would see the decay and ruin of the British World-Empire proceed at alarming speed.

It turned out that on the afternoon of Sunday the 20th the Emperor had received an American, a certain Mr. Robinson, whose acquaintance he had made during the Kiel week, who had impressed his own opinions with much success on the Emperor. It is extraordinary how shrewdly even foreigners learn to tell him what he likes to hear, and so bring themselves into favourable notice. In these cases the effect on the Emperor is generally greater than these people imagine.

Fortunately a good deal of it evaporates after a certain time, or other people come with other fairy tales and have their brief hour of success. It is amazing too how easy it is for foreigners in certain circumstances to be allowed to talk to him confidentially for hours together. It is open to any equerry, General, or Adjutant to suggest that such and such a person, who might be interesting, happens to be in Germany ; and he knows that it will be looked upon as a great proof of zeal and attention if he points it out. The consequence is that the most singular people get the chance of interviews with the Emperor, for which a Prussian Minister may have to wait for months. Even the Chief of the Civil Cabinet sometimes has the greatest

difficulty for weeks on end in obtaining an audience. While the Emperor is spending his time with such casual visitors, the highest Officers of State must wait for the acceptance of a resignation tendered ever so long ago, and others grow impatient while petitions of every kind remain unanswered. Judgments of the Courts cannot be confirmed; some convicted prisoners cannot be pardoned; others cannot be executed. Sometimes one would almost think it is not England but Prussia and the German Empire itself that is likely to get out of gear. But nothing of the kind happens. . . .

3rd March 1910.

At the great Court Concert of the 2nd, Count Schwerin-Löwitz, the new President of the Reichstag, was sitting with the Emperor at supper, which was served at small round tables. He is a serious hard-working man who enjoys the confidence of all parties, and therefore had been elected on the previous day by acclamation, without vote or opposition, as President of the Reichstag. He naturally expected that the Emperor would talk to him seriously—but nothing of the kind. At supper the Emperor entered into conversation mainly with others, and only made a few flippant remarks to him, as he did to the rest, and even after supper said nothing to him about the difficult office which he had assumed, nor anything else which had the remotest connection with his new position or duties. Small wonder that a man of his lofty aims who has always held himself aloof from the inner life of the Court, was very much disappointed at such want of interest in things that matter.

Not long ago there was an Ambassadors' dinner.

Here too I was witness of another of these characteristic little episodes, the importance of which the Emperor never gauges and never will. He chaffed the Ambassador Szögyény so unmercifully about his clothes (he was wearing the gala uniform of a Hungarian Magnate), that his behaviour finally became painful not only to the victim himself but to everyone else who happened to be near. The Ambassador of course knows our peculiar habits well enough, and is a quiet old gentleman with plenty of common sense, but the Emperor has not the faintest notion how much bitterness these jokes can cause, or how much animosity he stirs up against himself.

4th March 1910.

The day before yesterday, after the Court Concert, the Emperor invited some gentlemen to join him in the Equerries' Room to smoke, and he remained there till half-past one in the morning in animated conversation. There were present General von Kessel, Herr von Löwenfeld, Herr von Lyncker (Military Cabinet) and Admiral von Müller (Marine Cabinet). In addition there were Adjutant General von Marschall and Captain von Bülow as well as myself, as Court Marshal, in attendance.

The Emperor soon began to talk about Prince Bülow. I was astonished by the annihilating judgment he uttered and the profound irritation he displayed. He went so far as to say that the world had not seen such a hypocrite or liar since Caesar Borgia. He laid the whole blame for the downfall of Prince Eulenburg and the others concerned, at Bülow's door. He said he had bungled the whole business so that no other result was possible: and that quite probably the

scandals had not been unwelcome to him for personal reasons.

The Emperor thought that if Prince Bülow had at that time (that is when Prince Eulenburg came back from Territet) induced him to remain abroad, the exposure might have been avoided. This change of view on the Emperor's part is almost inexplicable to me, when I remember his moral indignation at the revelations which affected men in the highest places, and his fanatical insistence, which proved how little he knows of the world, that a noble example of moral purification must be given to all mankind by the relentless punishment of all such offenders. Nor can I forget the self-satisfied tone in which he often said: "Well, we have stamped out this pestilence, and are rid of such abominations for all time."

Bülow certainly had many faults, but he has always erred through weakness. His was essentially a servile nature, which clung nervously to office, and at the last he was only waiting for an opportunity of retiring in a way which would enable him to cut an imposing figure in the eyes of history. All this resulted in complete dependence on any orders which the Emperor might from time to time choose to give him. Thus he was induced to attempt many things which, in spite of his extraordinary adroitness, landed him in serious difficulties. Often it was only by misrepresenting facts, that he managed to prevent the Emperor from giving dangerous instructions. Out of all this the luxuriant imagination of the Emperor has created the picture of Bülow that he now paints. There is of course no doubt that many friends of the Emperor, who were not slow to observe that anything which was said against Bülow fell on fruitful soil, influenced his

judgment. On the evening in question the Emperor particularly quoted Admiral von Hollmann as his authority—which hardly surprises one. He also mentioned that he had now made sure that Bülow had not composed any of his famous speeches, but that they had all been written for him by Privy Councillor Hamann.[1] Bülow had learned them off by heart, and thus had acquired a reputation all over Europe as an orator.

This nonsense alone shows how little the Emperor knows of the world. He underrates the talents of Bülow, his extraordinary mastery of every subject on which he has to speak, and the brilliant skill with which, in the most difficult situations, he adapts his language perfectly to the exigencies of the moment. Even his opponents cannot refrain from admiring the masterly personal qualities he displayed during the agitated sittings of the Reichstag in November 1908, when he succeeded, though taken quite unawares, in riding out the storm which the Socialists had raised. Such an achievement is quite beyond the powers of a man who has only learnt by heart a speech written by somebody else and knows how to deliver it effectively. The Emperor also very much overrates Hamann, and quite forgets that his own speeches are always prepared and worked up for him. He never has to cope with any sudden emergency, no one can break into his speech, and no interruptions are allowed. I wonder what would happen to him if in ordinary conversation anyone had a chance of arguing in favour of opinions other than his own in his presence—but even that he does not tolerate. On the contrary he evades any opposition with all the means he has at command, and that is the tragedy of his life.

[1] Hamann, Bülow's private secretary and chief of the Press Bureau of the Foreign Office.

We are dominated at the moment by ultra-reactionary mischief-makers; but I am satisfied that it is not impossible to govern with them. So long as certain limits are not exceeded, real energy, courage, and consistency on the part of a Government have many advantages. I am only afraid that those in power are forgetting that certain reforms have in the course of time become inevitable. Thus, for instance, the outcry about the inadequacy of the Electoral Reforms is not purely artificial, as people would like the Emperor to believe, and the Socialistic mob and the Jews are not the only people who are discontented. The whole nation is a prey to deep-seated unrest, which should be watched with the greatest care. The very powerful ultra-reactionary party of the Agrarians is selfishly straining every nerve to maintain the franchise for the House of Representatives and the existing high tariffs as long as possible and to avoid the Succession Duty. The future only will tell us whether such an egotistical policy can succeed for ever.

I do not think that the Emperor's strength of will and power of resistance could be counted on in a moment of grave crisis as they could once have been. He has become more fanciful and feeble than formerly. I very much doubt if he will really stand firm when blood flows in torrents and attempts on his life and revolution follow. What will strong men profit us, if the highest of them all collapses?

The Emperor also mentioned the Krüger telegram,[1] and said he was quite innocent of it. The then Chancellor, Hohenlohe, and the Secretary of State,

[1] At the time of the Jameson Raid. The usual version of story is that the incident took place at the Foreign Office in Berlin.

Herr von Marschall,[1] he said, had simply come to him at the Potsdam railway station and shown him the telegram which they had drafted. He had at first resisted, but finally given in and signed. This was one of the constitutional actions for which the world had blamed him, as it did in the matter of the *Daily Telegraph* interview, where also he had acted in the most strictly constitutional manner. Finally he added: "If anything of the kind happens again, I shall not act constitutionally any more."

The animosity of the Emperor against Prince Bülow has reached such a pitch that he tries to make him alone answerable for the purchase of the Achilleion,[2] and insists that he acted on the Prince's advice. It is really wonderful that he should now try to fix the responsibility for this on Prince Bülow, when some of us remember how all the competent persons concerned, such as Eulenburg and Fürstenberg (who had received direct instructions from the Emperor to buy the property) did their utmost to protract the negotiations and not to conclude them, but that the Kaiser put himself into direct communication with the Archduke Francis Ferdinand behind their backs and surprised everybody, even Eulenburg, with the completed purchase. I am quite convinced that the Emperor's singular imagination will end by creating in him the firm conviction that the idea of the purchase originated in the brain of the Prince, and that he himself decided on the purchase with a heavy heart only in consequence of Bülow's unceasing insistence.

[1] Freiherr Adolph Marschall von Bieberstein, Foreign Secretary; in 1897 Ambassador at Constantinople, then Ambassador in London for a few months in 1912 till his death.

[2] The famous palace in Corfu belonging to the Empress of Austria.

The truth is, however, that Prince Bülow was as much surprised by the purchase as Eulenburg and Prince Fürstenberg, when the Emperor informed him of what had happened. It is quite probable, thorough courtier as he is, that he expressed no definite view, and I am sure he congratulated the Emperor on his new acquisition in the most amiable and flattering terms. After all, what concern was it of his if the Emperor chose to squander a few millions of his private fortune? If at any later time he took the question seriously in his capacity of Chancellor, there were no doubt more important reasons. But that the purchase may after all not be entirely without political consequences, is shown by what is happening just now. Directly the political situation in Greece becomes at all complicated the Emperor cannot go to Corfu. That is the reason of his annoyance at the present moment. When we recollect how indispensable Prince Bülow seemed to be to the Emperor in his daily life and how near he was to him in his heart of hearts one cannot help thinking of Schiller's lines:

> Denn das Herz wird mir schwer in der Fürsten Palästen,
> Wenn ich herab vom Gipfel des Glücks
> Stürzen sehe die Höchsten, die Besten
> In der Schnelle de Augenblicks![1]

We may think what we like about Prince Bülow, but he was a politician of more than ordinary distinction, and quite extraordinary abilities. His position with the Emperor weighed him down like lead. With such a situation he could not cope. Amiability and vanity

[1] From the *Bride of Messina*, Act iv, Sc. 7:

> Naught is secure in the dwellings of princes:
> Often, beholding the highest and best,
> Hurled by swift fate from the summits of glory,
> Sore is my heart with foreboding oppressed.

ended by turning him into a Byzantine, and thus his work and his brilliant capacities often came to naught. Both his home and foreign policy suffered in consequence, and now the Emperor thinks of him only as the scapegoat who has to bear the burden of every political sin. Perhaps the Emperor honestly imagines that things were really as he says, but unfortunately the pictures he draws bear but little resemblance to the truth.

5th March 1910.

At the present moment the Emperor is obsessed by the view that the Conservative declaration of November 1908,[1] was an act of treason against himself and that they must sue for his forgiveness. He returns to this again and again, and the other day insisted that he must have this declaration of the Conservatives, that is to say, their apology, in his family archives—in other words, in writing. To-day he had a long talk on the subject with Bethmann,[2] but the Chancellor declared that the political situation was at the moment so serious (Franchise Demonstrations, etc.) that he must urgently dissuade His Majesty from running the risk of alienating the Conservatives. Whereupon the Emperor is reported to have replied that, later on, he would have this declaration in spite of everything, and have it deposited in the family archives.

A week ago we had the Old Comrades' Dinner of the *Gardes du Corps*. In the Casino the Emperor discussed the matter again with Count Pückler (Rogau), von

[1] After the publication of the interview in the *Daily Telegraph* in October 1908, the Conservative Party, at the time led by Dr. von Heydebrand, joined in the protest made in many quarters against the Emperor's personal policy.

[2] He had succeeded Prince Bülow in July 1909.

Kessel (Glauche), and Prince Löwenstein—the last two of whom are deputies—and so the matter became the subject of various negotiations between these gentlemen, the Chief of the Civil Cabinet and several others. A banquet and a Casino are certainly the least appropriate place and occasion for a sovereign to discuss such a question. . . .

* * *

An important person in the prosecution of Count Eulenburg was Count Hülsen-Haeseler, who had in his time been Military Attaché in Vienna when Prince Eulenburg was Ambassador there. The Prince at that time reported to the Emperor that the Count was not at all fitted to be Attaché there, and that he had not succeeded—and still less had his wife—in making any kind of position in Vienna society. I heard at the time that this report was very witty and very malicious. The Emperor handed it to the Military Cabinet to be filed; with the result that Count Hülsen-Haeseler when he became Chief of the Military Cabinet, found it among the documents. He was so furious that he spoke about it to everybody, especially to the gentlemen who usually accompanied the Emperor in his Northern cruise. His resentment never cooled, and when the Eulenburg scandal was in the wind, he was so dominated by it that he frequently took the opportunity to egg the Emperor on to take still severer measures—an easy task.

14*th March* 1910.

It is now decided that owing to the troubles in Greece the journey to Corfu will be abandoned.

When the conversation turned the other day on

taxation the Emperor said: "They must pay taxes until they are black in the face." One thing which causes anxiety is the Emperor's complete ignorance of finance. It is his conception that the nation is to pay anything that is wanted, and it is the duty of the Ministers to extract what is needful from the people, no matter how. In this respect other rulers, though they may have been less scrupulous in their choice of means, were better informed and more sensible. I cannot help thinking of Frederick the Great, Napoleon, and Louis XIV. It is perhaps only because the times have changed, and because the Emperor is at heart soft and weak, that we choose less violent means than they did.

18*th March* 1910.

The manner and attitude of the older ladies of the Empress' Court have undergone a curious change. I have often admired the openness with which Countess Brockdorff and Fräulein von Gersdorff discuss affairs, even politics, with the Emperor. Unfortunately this but very rarely happens in the case of the men. Nevertheless the ladies have never had a lasting influence, apart from the fact that they have induced the Court to range itself under the standard of Virtue, Morality and Christianity, and have completely identified themselves with the pietism and ultra-conservatism which we so often find in the families of our aristocracy.

For some years past it has been the considered plan of the Emperor to remove the older ladies from the *entourage* of the Empress, and replace them by younger ones. He took the first step about four years ago, when he appointed Ladies in Waiting.[1] Now comes

[1] See entry December 22, 1903, p. 54.

the second. Owing to the death of Count Seckendorff and the banishment of Count Wedel, suitable lodgings have fallen vacant in the Princesses' Palace. The older ladies are to be placed on the retired list, so to speak, and to live there.

Life at Court has many specious attractions; and no one who has once overcome the small and external inconveniences due to its formality, ever gives it up without strong reasons. It offers opportunities of coming into contact with many eminent and attractive men and women, and its circumstances make it very easy to keep in touch with all the latest ideas in Science and the Arts, and to observe such developments from the best point of vantage. Many interesting journeys are made in the greatest comfort. We have the most brilliant social life in Berlin, since a great number of people find it their chief happiness to enter or remain in relationship with the Court. We have a free *entrée* to the Royal Theatres every day. In all material respects we are spoilt to the utmost, and while we are on duty we have no possibility of spending money, and the salaries are not to be despised. In addition to this there is the certainty of a pension in old age or sickness. It is not difficult to understand why the majority of men sacrifice their freedom and independence for these dazzling externals. But a man of principle should say to himself that with all its glitter and material advantages, such a life cannot satisfy his spiritual needs.

* * *

Once more the danger of banishment to the Princesses' Palace, which threatened the older ladies of the Empress' *entourage*, has blown over, probably through

the personal influence of the Empress who remained firm in her opposition to the scheme. The Emperor always shrinks at the last moment from any domestic trouble and Eulenburg, too, does not care to take on himself the odium of expelling these ladies from their Paradise after twenty-five years of loyal service.

19th March 1910.

A few days ago General von Lyncker, Chief of the Military Cabinet, told me that His Majesty said to him in a melancholy tone, when he took over the office: "Please, my dear Lyncker, not dry reports only but now and then a funny story." That is very characteristic of the Emperor's love of telling or hearing humorous anecdotes. He himself can tell or hear a story for the tenth time and laugh as heartily as when it was new. The unfortunate consequence of this taste is that many serious men have little success with the Emperor, and every buffoon is preferred to them. This is the most natural explanation of the many surprising selections of men for important posts. I myself cannot find, even with the lantern of Diogenes, any good reason for the choice of some of them. The most serious disadvantage is that men who are in themselves quite able, should feel that the quality to which they directly owe their position is their knack of telling good stories, and so they inevitably become too zealous with their anecdotes and their jokes and degenerate into jesters and clowns.

30th March 1910.

Last night we were in the Royal Theatre and the play was Shakespeare's *Richard II.* with Joseph Kainz as

"Guest."[1] The Emperor expressed severe disapproval of the whole performance and of all the artists, even Kainz. The Empress, the Princes, Crown Princess and Princess Victoria Louise apparently did not find the play much to their taste either.

My personal impression was that they could not stomach the simple, even if occasionally somewhat emphatic, plain speaking of the great Shakespeare. His men and women remain true to life to-day as ever, but we do not wish to know anything about them, and that is why they are distasteful to us. We care nothing about their passions, and commit the blunder of finding the whole thing unnatural and unseemly. Shakespeare only arouses a spirit of opposition in us and we try to comfort ourselves by reflecting that the play as a whole no longer fits the twentieth century, and that much of it is ridiculous. I am convinced, however, that there is hardly another piece so full of things which should make us wince as *Richard II.*

To anyone who believes that he can do any good by telling home truths I say: *Lasciate ogni speranza.* Only bitter experience and disillusion can really help us; not the teachings of a poet.

4th April 1910.

I have read the private reports sent in to the Emperor by General Hülsen-Haeseler, the General Intendant of the Royal Theatres, about the building of the new Opera House. What will posterity say when it discovers how such reports are garbled for the personal use of the Emperor? First of all his person is brought into the limelight, and he is represented as the real author of all past and possible future achievements and triumphs.

[1] Joseph Kainz of Vienna, celebrated tragedian.

His favourite ideas or wishes are pushed into the foreground. The greatest trouble is taken to skate lightly over anything that is not popular in All-Highest quarters, yet cannot be quite suppressed in spite of the utmost care. The Emperor reads the report, runs his pencil through a great deal of it and writes very emphatic comments in the margin, which often paralyse any artistic effort, or at best direct it into the wrong channels. The world will never know what difficulties all men in important positions have to contend with until the archives are opened in which the records are preserved.

The Foreign Office under the Chancellorship of Bülow will be a particularly rich storehouse. It is easy to understand how the Chancellor had so often to expend the greater part of his energies in making good the mischief the Emperor had done by his meddling in foreign politics; but only too often things were past mending. Thus it came to pass that his policy was marked by inconsistency and vacillation; and though during his tenure of office we witnessed extraordinary economic progress in Germany, many errors must be laid to his charge. Still, it must be remembered in all fairness how much the Emperor's constant interference is to blame, and the astonishing thing is, that in spite of his blunders, German prosperity should have increased so marvellously.

A few days ago the Secretary of State, von Schoen,[1] and Professor Schiemann[2] were invited. The Emperor talked politics nearly all the evening even in the presence of the ladies. He discussed in detail the whole subject of our relations with England and Russia. When Far Eastern politics came to be mentioned, the

[1] See p. 239. [2] See p. 270.

Emperor described a projected Russian railway which he said would not be very profitable to Russia, but of the greatest importance for us. After this project had been carried out Tsing-Tao would become a regular second Hong-Kong.

It is a subject of wonder to me that he should have had such confidence in this Russian (Professor Schiemann), who, according to those most likely to know, has no position in his own country. Anyhow it is a fact that Schiemann, in spite of his clever pretence of hatred of Russia maintains the best possible relations with Russian Official Quarters, and is an intimate friend of the Grand Duke Constantine. The two are in correspondence, and also find occasion for confidential conversation. Lastly, there is no doubt that Schiemann is constantly in financial difficulties.

Why does not the Secretary for Foreign Affairs ever warn the Emperor to be more cautious? Simply because he is afraid of the difficulties and risks of such a step. No one can tell how the Emperor would take any hint, or what ill-considered action might not follow. As it is almost impossible to prove the political unreliability of such a man, everybody is in a serious dilemma. The Emperor's real hope is that he may induce this man, just as he induced Privy Councillor Dr. Koser, Director of the State Archives, to write "history," in a way favourable to himself. Time will show whether he will succeed. Personally, I have the gravest doubts.

7th April 1910.

We place a higher value on a "right point of view" than on a broad outlook; we rate obedience above independence and intelligence, and "zeal" above quiet

honest performance of duty; and then we wonder why we have so much intrigue and servility around us. The great Talleyrand was right when he said: "*Surtout pas trop de zèle.*"

Over-excitability and excessive zeal bore fruit in the Socialistic demonstrations yesterday. A proclamation like that which was issued by Herr von Jagow,[1] the new Police President—was certainly impolitic. It betrays nervousness among the highest authorities; it lays us open to criticism and only inflames and excites the masses. Indeed I regard it as certain that such notices act as a provocation, and that, thereby, the authorities put themselves in the wrong,—a matter of no small importance. The Social Democrats had asked permission for a large demonstration in the Park at Treptow. Not only was permission refused, but they were told that the demonstration would be prevented by force. Then yesterday, when the whole Police Force had occupied the Park at Treptow, the Social Democrats at the eleventh hour organised a meeting in the Tiergarten. The Police Force had no information from its spies until too late, and when the masses had assembled in the Tiergarten, it still held the Park at Treptow, and we covered ourselves with ridicule. Most people will admire the splendid organisation of the Social Democrats, and there is even a danger that many sections of the bourgeoisie will sympathise with them if the Police make many blunders like these. The former Police-President, Herr von Stubenrauch, would certainly not have issued this shower of proclamations and would have allowed the meeting in the Park at Treptow. After all, what can

[1] Dr. Traugott von Jagow, not to be confused with Gottlieb von Jagow, who was Foreign Secretary from 1913.

be less troublesome for the Police than an assembly so far from the centre of the town? It is quite easy to get news of all the resolutions that are passed there, and even if some few bourgeois are really frightened, that only makes them the more friendly to the Government; and when processions are organised from Treptow to the Castle, the Ministries or the Palace of the Chancellor, it is easy enough to keep them in hand.

When he was still Governor of the District of Teltow, von Stubenrauch frequently received peremptory warnings by the Emperor's orders, that the main road between Potsdam and Berlin was not in sufficiently good condition to allow the Imperial car to travel from Berlin to Potsdam. Von Stubenrauch who, as Governor, was not the competent authority, since the road was a provincial highway, said nothing, but pigeon-holed these telegrams, which were occasionally very unpleasant, because he knew that the responsible authorities would only be annoyed by them, but could not satisfy the Emperor's wishes owing to lack of means. Among other peculiar characteristics of old Stubenrauch, this was the one that I always liked best. People who take things so calmly are rare but, if things grow serious, they are apt to be the most reliable. The constant favour shown to men of the opposite type generates intrigue and Byzantinism.

The day before yesterday, in the evening, there was only a small circle of not very interesting people, and so it happened that His Majesty condescended to have a long conversation with myself. First of all he complained that it was very unjust to circulate lies about him, and to assert that he was £300,000 in debt. I tried at first to suggest that, were I in his place, I should not take such unfounded rumours too seriously.

The Emperor then spoke at great length about his relations with the financial world and individual financiers whom he said he had lately invited once or twice, and thus brought into contact with his own finances. I have frequently noticed how my ideas and my expression of them pain him—I can put it no other way. He lives in quite another world; my way of looking at things is unpleasing to him. First of of all he likes people to listen better than I do, and speak less, and if they do speak, not to call a spade a spade as is my habit. He has been spoiled by other people's way of representing ugly things as beautiful. This conversation ended as those between us mostly do. The Emperor seemed to be thoroughly uncomfortable, turned his back on me and went over to somebody else.

14*th May* 1910.

The Emperor's education, his system of government and his views generate, or at least foster intrigue which is followed by Byzantinism, and this in turn only too naturally by despotism; and for a country despotism sooner or later means enfeeblement. However alluring it may sound that all the threads should be in the hand of one man incapable of any but just, wise, and broad views, and however effective and beneficial such a government would be, if it were possible, yet anyone who has read history knows that men who fulfil this ideal are very rare in the world, and will always be rare, and that most rulers allow themselves to be misled by absolute power into actions which do not satisfy the ideal I have described, and are often in direct conflict with it. How great then is the danger when many millions are called on to entrust their fate without

question to the hands of one man on whom nothing but an accident of birth has conferred this enormous power.

Anyone who has read this book attentively up to this point must realise that I was so often in direct opposition to my All-Highest master that I was bound to become a prey to a serious conflict of feeling. I therefore again and again begged Count Eulenburg to find some other occupation for me in which I should not be obliged to work in such direct personal contact with the Emperor. I added that I should be ready to undertake any office, even if it were not at all comparable, in regard to material advantage, with my present post. Count Eulenburg evaded my request so adroitly that I could not attain my object. So one day I proposed three different gentlemen as my successors, all of whom were, in my judgment, admirably suited to be Court Marshal. He said with a smile : " And you are better than anyone of these three." It was clear that, in this way, I should not get any further.

Then in the Spring of 1910, during the Emperor's usual journey, I fell ill and I said to myself : " Now or never." I felt that I must be freed from such serious conflicts with myself. Count Eulenburg was very friendly and would not listen and said to me : " You shall have leave as long as is necessary. I will arrange everything, but will not let you go from your post." I realised that if I did not this time carry out my determination to give up my post, I could not say when I should have another opportunity, and so I determined to take the bit in my teeth. Accordingly, I had a conversation one day lasting an hour and a half with the old Count, who sat at my bedside, and in

the end he realised that he could not overcome my opposition.

The following letter from Count Eulenburg showed the friendly feelings he entertained for me :—

Potsdam, Orangerie, 10*th June* 1910.

"My Dear Count,—It was an evil piece of news that your kind letter of the 8th brought to me. I am really sorry that you feel that you must leave your post, and I am able to tell you that His Majesty expressed his regret at your resignation with the most appreciative words about the way in which you have carried out your duties as Court Marshal, but as you declare yourself, in such decided terms, unfit for further service, we have no alternative but to accept your resignation. In order to qualify for a pension you must give me further details about the duration of your service and the amount of your army pension. Without these I can take no official steps.

"Nothing has been decided about your successor, but after all I think it will be Wawa Henckel, since Gontard's health has completely broken down.

"The wedding[1] in the New Palace took its brief and uneventful course in the same tropical heat as that of the Crown Prince five years ago. The drought in this neighbourhood is becoming serious, for the thunderstorms that visited the surrounding district passed over Potsdam.

"Negotiations about the increase of the Civil List had a surprisingly good result in the House of Representatives, in spite of many ups and downs during the preliminary discussions. The final vote yesterday

[1] Of Prince Eitel Friederich.

was really a monarchical demonstration against the few Social Democrats in the House, in which the Progressives and the Poles unanimously joined.

"With my best regards and those of the Countess, I am

"Yours very sincerely,

A. Eulenburg."

On the 1st July 1910 I undertook the management of the estate of Nieder-Grossenborau which I had bought from my father. It keeps me well occupied, and I have my reward in the profoundest satisfaction and content.

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